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BLACKWOOD'S

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THE MOROCCO SCARE.

BY WALTER B. HARRIS.

TANGIER, *June* 5, 1900.

IN returning recently to Tangier from a visit to the southern capital of Morocco, where the Sultan and his court were in residence, the writer was not a little surprised to find awaiting him a large batch of newspaper cuttings, culled from journals of every shade of political opinion, one and all harping upon the opening of the Morocco Question, the intended conquest of the Moorish Empire by the French, and the internal struggles which were taking place in the interior of the country. The writer's surprise was the greater in that he imagined that the French objective, the occupation of a few oases, valueless in themselves, over which the Sultan had never held active jurisdiction, was so natural and comprehensible as to cause little or no apprehension in England; while as to the rumoured internal troubles, the very tribes among which they were supposed to be occurring were busily engaged in gathering in their harvest. But still more thrilling news was to follow, and we read now of the proclamation of a "holy war" in the North-West Sahara, and of the general collapse of Morocco.

Most of us will be able to call to mind having listened to all this more than once before, and the probabilities are that we shall listen to it many times again before the actual end of the Moorish Empire arrives, or even approaches. Still recent events are worthy of some mention, if only to point out how grossly exaggerated have been the cries of "Wolf!"

Briefly, the French have *not* invaded Morocco; the country is *not* disturbed; a "holy war" has *not* been proclaimed; and, as far as the mind of mortal man can perceive, Morocco is *not* going to collapse. In discussing the subject with a highly educated and influential Hebrew resident of Tangier, the conversation turned upon the future, and he narrated an anecdote very much to the point. In the fervour of his religion when a child, he used to be continually asking his old grandmother when the promised Messiah was to be looked for. Her answer was always the same. "Don't worry about that, my boy," she would say. "Every one of us has been asking that question for hundreds and hundreds of years, and have all died disappointed. I have no doubt you will do the same." The old lady's common-sense rejoinder applies equally well to Morocco. Generations have awaited its collapse — and died disappointed. Periodical scares have filled column after column of the press with the Morocco Question for decades past; and within the last few years, at almost regular intervals, Tangier has been besieged by correspondents, awaiting daily the explosion, only to leave a few weeks later disappointed and crestfallen, but not without having mastered, entirely to their own satisfaction, the Morocco Question, and having discovered and aired in public the only possible remedies and results. The writer himself has more than once, in the days when he was not so well acquainted with the country as he is at present, predicted its speedy downfall; but a more prolonged residence amongst the Moors has instilled him to-day with a little of their conscience-easing doctrine of predestination, and he, like the native, is content to say, "It is written in the book of Fate."

But though the existing state of alarm and anxiety is unnecessary, Morocco has been passing through a crisis which might have upset the equilibrium of another country, but through which the decaying empire has passed without the faintest sign of giving way. And it is with this crisis that we have to deal here.

As late as December last the normal state of misgovernment and oppression was running its usual course, and the atmosphere seemed unclouded. The European Powers had no reason to fear its collapse; and the native officials looked forward to no interference, external or internal, with the diligent service of their religion and the still more diligent practice of extortion. The trouble arose in the East — so many troubles do! — and rumours reached the Moorish Court that the French were advancing upon Tuat, a series of large oases situated in the Sahara due south of Algeria, and separated from Morocco by vast distances of sandy wastes. The Moorish Sultans have never been able to hold more than a nominal authority in those districts, which lay, politically and geographically,

well within the sphere of French influence. The oases were worthless to Morocco—all territory from which money cannot be squeezed is worthless in their eyes—and dangerous to the French, for from their security raids were made upon the caravans passing to the south from Algeria. The tract of land in question lay in the direct route of the proposed trans-Saharan railway, and proved an obstacle in its extension in the direction of Timbuctu and Senegal. Numerous complaints of raids upon caravans had from time to time been addressed to the Sultan, but no redress was forthcoming, for even the Moorish Government acknowledged that their authority was *nil;* while the great distances that separated the oases from the capitals of Morocco, and the dangerous and waterless extent of desert that had to be traversed in order to reach them, prevented an attempt on the part of the Sultan's authorities to bring the delinquents to book.

It must not be thought that the French ever acknowledged the Sultan's proprietary rights over Tuat. The question had always been a pending one, upon the discussion of which the French Government had now and again commenced to enter. But the necessity of occupation has only lately been forced upon them, when the progress of their Saharan railway southwards seemed likely to be barred by the turbulent and ungoverned tribes which inhabit Tuat. There is no doubt to whom the oases ought to belong, and it is preposterous that any one should be found in Europe to press the claims of the Sultan. In every way they are part and parcel of the hinterland of Algeria. No other country in the world but France can lay the least claim to even a commercial interest in these remote and poverty-stricken districts, where, now that the French have occupied them, law and order will be introduced, and the welfare of the inhabitants greatly improved. When one knows how beneficial the French rule has been in other parts of the Sahara, and how under their system of artesian wells and irrigation enormous sandy wastes have been rendered fertile and the inhabitants prosperous, one cannot help feeling that it is a cause of congratulation that Tuat has fallen into their hands. The integrity of Morocco has not been threatened; France has only occupied what ought by every possible right to have been hers years ago; and until the integrity of the country is in danger, it would be more fitting to keep silence. That the occupation of a few fever-stricken and worthless oases in the centre of the Sahara desert should disturb the peace of every newspaper in England savours of an exhibition of that international jealousy with which we find so much fault in others, and of which we are not seldom guilty ourselves. To those who have studied the question and know the features of the country occupied, and the nature of

the population, the presence of the French in Tuat is eminently satisfactory. It may be argued that they have not rested content to remain there, but have pushed on toward the Morocco frontier as far as Igli. This is true, but its occupation is minimised by the fact that Igli is a place of no importance, a mere collection of mud huts inhabited by an extremely poor and dirty population, of which the adult males number some three hundred. Why then should the French have thrown a column across the desert to occupy a spot where their troops are suffering severelyfrom fever. The importance of Igli to France is this, that the Wad Ghir on which the town—if it can so be called—is situated is the only fertile valley in the district, and running almost due north and south as it does, it forms not only an excellent frontier, but would, if neglected, be used by the tribes as a base from which to make their raids on the railway and on passing caravans. It is one of the very few spots where food and fodder could be found for a number of horsemen, and as such would be a constant danger of a flank movement upon their southern possessions. The occupation by the French gives them perfect security in this direction, as on the Morocco side Igli is bounded by a large extent of desert, from which it would be extremely difficult for the marauding tribes to engage in pillage and highway robbery. The nearest large oasis to Igli on the west is Tafilet, distant nearly two hundred miles.

The argument, which has been freely used in England, that Igli is only a step towards the conquest of Morocco, is absurd. When the French at some time in the future undertake the invasion of the country they are not likely to choose a route that will take them hundreds of miles out of their way, and necessitate armies passing over enormous tracts of waterless desert and through fever-stricken oases, when farther north a dozen caravan roads across fertile country lead straight from the frontier to the capitals of Morocco. It must not be forgotten either that in the occupation of Igli not a shot was fired, and the French were welcomed by the inhabitants with every appearance, if not of delight, at least of satisfaction.

What, meanwhile, was the position adopted by the Moorish Government toward this move on the part of France. Various letters of expostulation were addressed to the French Minister at Tangier, which met with the same measure of success as had the attempts of a succession of French Ministers to enforce the payment by the Sultan of moneys due to French subjects. Then a private appeal to the Powers was resorted to, by means of informal communications sent to their representatives at Tangier, in which their intervention was asked for on the ground of everlasting and never-ceasing friendship. As this friendship has been illustrated during the last few years by the hurling into dungeons at regular intervals of

natives protected by the Powers, and by placing every imaginable difficulty in the way of European trade and enterprise, it is no great wonder that the appeal was not warmly received. Italy and Spain alone, two Powers whose interests in Tuat are absolutely nil, paid any real attention to the Sultan's requests. Their policy is not difficult to fathom. Spain took the part of Morocco with an idea of succeeding in obtaining favour at Court and obtaining in return the longed-for extension of territory at Ceuta, and Italy from private reasons, connected more with her Legation at Tangier than with the policy of her Foreign Office.

With the exception of these protests, the Moorish Government did nothing to check the French advance. The Sultan had sent for the principal men of the frontier tribes, apparently to consult with them as to the means to be employed in the case of farther aggression. The chiefs of the larger tribes, and a number of shereefs from Tafilet, answered the summons and came to the capital. Here the Sultan's hospitality, which it would be imagined could have been lavish to the men on whom the protection of his empire depended, took its usual parsimonious character, and the hundred or two tribal representatives were left practically to starve on a mere pittance. They had brought with them certain sums of money to purchase arms from the Moorish Government with which to protect their families and their lands. The agents of the Grand Vizier gladly relieved them of the cash, but no rifles were forthcoming; and in order to sustain life many of these men had to sell their horses, and eventually return on foot. In what was apparently an hour of danger the officials at the Moorish Court thought of nothing but their pockets, and left the protection of the integrity of their empire to the European Powers. Morocco deserved to have fallen, but the good luck which guards the crumbling old structure did not desert her, for the French proceeded no farther than Igli. Had they chosen to do so, the action of the Sultan and his Government would have proved most advantageous to them, for in all probability the treatment that the tribal delegates had received at the capital from the Commander of the Faithful would have tempted them to passively follow the example of their relatives at Igli, and allow the French to advance without molestation. Such, indeed, was the fate that the Government of Morocco deserved.

The Sultan determined to make one more appeal to Europe, and accordingly despatched to Tangier a special envoy, Kaid M'nihi, who had on one occasion occupied the unprofitable post of Governor of Igli. His mission failed, for, before he was able to act upon his instructions, he died from the effects of falling asleep in a room where a brazier of charcoal was burning. Whether the Government will despatch another envoy in his place is

doubtful: it is more than probable that they will allow the matter to drop, and make no more attempts to protest against the occupation by France of territory which Morocco pretended to claim as her own, but which the French had every right to consider as theirs.

While the Eastern frontier was causing no little anxiety at the Moorish Court, all official business was suddenly brought to a standstill by the illness and death of the Grand Vizier. Sid Ahmed ben Musa, who occupied the post for six years, with so much advantage to himself and so little to the world in general, was himself the son of a Grand Vizier, and during the latter part of the reign of Mulai el Hassen, the late Sultan, he was Hajib, or chamberlain. It was owing to him that the late Sultan's death was so skilfully concealed for two days; and it was he who caused the corpse to be borne along with all the honours of a living Sultan in the royal palanquin, in order that he might forestall his rivals and seat the young Abdul Aziz, the present Sultan, on the throne before the world in general knew that Mulai el Hassen was dead. It was he, too, who a couple of months later, at Mequinez, by a *coup d'état*, arrested the Grand Vizier and Minister of War, and threw them into dungeons, to usurp their position and their power. Nominating himself Grand Vizier, he filled the other high posts at Court—it was easy for him to arrange that they should be vacant—with members of his own family and followers, and, until his death on May 13 last, he held absolute authority in the country, the young Sultan being a mere puppet in his hands.

The extortions and rapacity of Sid Ahmed had rendered him universally detested, and it seemed more than probable that on his decease the rabble, downtrodden by his inordinate pride and avarice, might turn and avenge themselves upon his friends and his property. But such was not the case, and no disturbances ensued, when, after a struggle against death that illustrated his enormous will-power and tenacity of life, and astonished the three European doctors who attended him, he succumbed to the complicated results of an attack of influenza, to the general satisfaction of the inhabitants of Morocco.

It is nearly always the unexpected that happens in Morocco, and the Vizier's death was received by the people with perfect calm, though his demise must mean a great change to them. To those who knew the inner workings of the Moorish Court, the succeeding manœuvres of the various political parties were interesting enough. So jealous had been Sid Ahmed during his lifetime of the possibility of interference with his prerogatives, that he had excluded from the Moorish Court the very men who by birth and station had the most right to be there—namely, the relations of the young Sultan. Mulai Mo-

hammed, the Sultan's brother, accused of high treason at the time of Mulai Abdul Aziz's accession, has long lain a prisoner in the recesses of the palace. But against most of his Majesty's relations no possible charge could be brought; yet the Grand Vizier found means of rendering their high positions of no avail to them by stopping their civil lists, and by preventing their ever being received by the Sultan, and possibly thus obtaining an opportunity of airing their grievances. Mulai Abdul Aziz is said, and no doubt truly, never to have granted an interview to any one at which the Grand Vizier was not present, whereas in the days of his father it was a common custom of the Sultan to see both natives and Europeans quite alone.

The Vizier's death restored to some extent to the Sultan's relatives their rightful position at Court, and the writer noticed that at the public reception of Señor Ojeda, the Spanish Minister, by his Majesty in May last, he was accompanied by members of the Shereefian family, who would never have ventured thus to assume their rightful position had they not been assured that the Vizier, who lay upon his deathbed, was certain to die. Had he by any miracle recovered, these relations of the Sultan would have paid for their rashness by some act of cruelty on his part. But his death followed only a few days later, to release from enforced seclusion one or two of the most able men in the kingdom, amongst them the Sultan's uncle, Mulai el Amin, and his relative Sid Mohammed el Marani. The latter is especially a man of undoubted ability and of most gentle manner, an ideal Moslem of the old school. The advice of these men—and it is to be hoped that the young Sultan will avail himself of it—cannot fail to act for the benefit of the country.

The Vizier's death occurred on Sunday, May 13, and, as is the custom in the country, he was buried the same afternoon, the Sultan attending the funeral. There is no doubt that Mulai Abdul Aziz owed a deep debt of gratitude to Sid Ahmed, who had not only placed him upon the throne, but succeeded in keeping him there through the first few years of his reign, when disturbance and revolt were rife. But his Majesty's eyes were to be opened as to the manner in which his Vizier had fulfilled his trust.

It is a custom in Morocco that all the property of an official reverts at death to the Crown. The logic which leads to such a result is simple, for the Government argues that all fortunes thus accumulated consist of moneys illegally retained by the authorities. A governor when appointed is probably possessed of no considerable fortune: when he dies he may be a millionaire. Whence came his wealth? Squeezed most certainly from the tribes under his authority, and therefore amassed only by the prerogatives of the position

in which the Sultan had placed him. It has never struck the Moorish Government that these great fortunes might more honestly be returned to the people from whom they were stolen. The result is entire confiscation to the Crown, including often such private property as the Governor may have been possessed of before his appointment, and not seldom too of the property of his relations. When the mighty fall in Morocco, the crash brings down with them their families, even uncles and cousins, and all connected with them, and it is not seldom that the sons of great governors, who have been brought up in the luxury of slaves and horses and retinues of mounted men, have to go begging in the streets. And so it was the young Abdul Aziz was destined to feed his eyes upon the Vizier's gold, for the few days succeeding Sid Ahmed's death saw case after case and box after box of gold coin carried from his residence to the Palace. It must have been a startling awakening for the youth, who had placed every confidence in his Vizier, and his trust in man must have been severely shaken, for the great fortune of the Grand Vizier, amounting probably to two or three millions sterling, consisted of moneys that ought in the natural course of events to have found their way into the Imperial treasury. And this vast sum Sid Ahmed had collected in six years of viziership, while he must have expended almost a similar amount on the vast palaces he erected in the various capitals, and the large landed estates that he purchased.

It is as yet too early to venture any opinion on the new Ministry in Morocco. A new broom sweeps clean, it is said, but the new Vizier and his associates have scarcely begun to sweep at all. No doubt they are feeling their way and measuring the influence of their political rivals before attempting to inaugurate any policy. What this policy will be it is difficult to guess; but this much is certain, that whatever direction it may take it will sooner or later be largely regulated by the innate rapacity of those in authority. The new men's names at present convey but little, for all the political personages of the Court have been hidden behind the one predominant figure of the late Vizier. But it is probable that the young Sultan, now some nineteen or twenty years of age, will issue from the seclusion of his palace and assert his authority. Up to the present time he has been merely a cipher; but the writer, who had not seen him previously for nearly three years, was much struck by the improvement of his manner and bearing during a visit to the capital a month or two since. Formerly intensely shy and nervous, he wore a look almost of stupidity, rendered the more unpleasant by a pout of the lips. He took little or no notice, and paid scarcely any attention to diplomatic or official matters which were discussed in his presence, seldom if ever speaking. But his awkwardness has

largely disappeared. He has grown very considerably in stature, and is now a tall man, a head above most of his officials. He walks and rides well, and takes notice of all that is passing, and apparently engages his surrounding officials in conversation. In fact he has begun to give some promise of likeness to his father, who was the most competent and the most charming man who has held the Moorish throne. No more popular move could be made than for his Majesty to take the supreme direction of his own affairs, and govern his country himself.

On the whole, there seems to be a strong impression amongst the natives of all classes that things are improving. But not much credence can be placed in such reports. When Sid Ahmed carried out his *coup d'état* and thrust his rivals into dungeons, the Moors said that at last a good time was coming; but after six years of the new man's oppression they looked back upon the old *régime* with sincere regrets: and so it may be again. A slight alleviation of taxation at first, and small attempts to introduce a little justice into the general policy of "squeeze," and then, when the new Ministry is assured of its position, the old corruption will set in and things be as bad as ever they were, or worse. The state of affairs is hopeless —the doctors abandoned hope long ago; but the patient doesn't die.

The attitude that the new Ministry will adopt towards Europeans will be gathered from the success that attends the Spanish embassy now at the capital. Señor Ojeda had the misfortune to arrive at Court just as the Grand Vizier fell ill, and in the resulting confusion he was kept for a considerable time without even obtaining a public audience with the Sultan and presenting his credentials. Nor would he have obtained even this civility had he not, after a fortnight's delay, informed the acting Foreign Minister that he had been sent as Envoy of the Spanish King and Government to the Sultan and Government of Morocco, and as such insisted on being properly received. He added, that unless the ordinary formalities of his reception were immediately complied with, he would leave the capital and return to Spain, informing his Government that, owing to the illness of the Grand Vizier, neither Sultan nor Government existed in Morocco.

It was only after this forcible but just protest that he was able to obtain the most ordinary civility on the part of the Court officials. But further delays were to ensue, and until the Grand Vizier died no discussion of political or diplomatic questions took place. The principal object of Señor Ojeda's embassy are concessions in two parts of Morocco, or, failing both, to obtain one and exchange it for a second. By a succession of treaties, including those of 1860 and that of Martinez Campos, concluded only a few years back, the rights of Spain have been recognised to a seaport—a fishing-station it

is termed — on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, in or near the Sus district. That Spain once occupied such a spot there is little doubt, and it is said that somewhere on that dreary desert coast there are still to be seen the ruins of the houses of Santa Cruz de Mar Pequeña. Wherever the port may have been, its whereabouts are now extremely vague, and Señor Ojeda wishes to settle with the Moorish Government the exact position of the place, with an idea of its reoccupation by Spain, or more probably of its exchange for the other concession that he is desirous of obtaining. The Moorish Government is not likely to assist him in either case, and Santa Cruz having been thoroughly lost, it is certain that the Sultan will do his best to prevent its being found again, and even if its position is discovered, the usual procrastination will come into play, and Spain be prevented from taking possession unless she is prepared to do so by force. The second concession is to Spain a more important one, the inclusion in the territory of Ceuta of a bay and anchorage, and the opening of Ceuta itself as a port for trade. A distinct advantage to Spain would be the extent of territory, including Bensus Bay; but what she can hope to gain by the founding of a Moorish custom-house in Ceuta and the opening up of trade there, it is difficult even to surmise. Surrounded on all sides by most difficult mountains, which are crossed only by tracks that lead almost nowhere, it seems incredible that Spain believes that she could compete with the Moorish ports. The only large town in the vicinity of Ceuta is Tetuan, but Tetuan is supplied by its own port, only five miles distant, while the cities of Central Morocco are infinitely nearer the ports of Tangier, Laraiche, and Rabat. The tribes inhabiting the country which surrounds Ceuta are living in abject poverty, while apart from these disabilities every bale of goods introduced would have to be twice taxed, by the Spanish and Moorish custom-houses, whereas elsewhere there is only the Moorish duty to pay. The very fact of the presence of a Spanish custom-house would deter experienced traders from importing goods *viâ* Ceuta, for the reputation of such establishments is none of the best.

The influence of Spain in Morocco succumbed at the time of the American war, and if Señor Ojeda obtains even a small portion of what he asks, he ought to consider himself a fortunate man. Morocco has no fear of Spain, as she has of France and England, while she hates every one and everything Spanish on account of the constant troubles occasioned by their possessions along the Mediterranean coast. The French, no doubt in revenge for Spain's attitude in regard to Tuat, are by no means supporting Señor Ojeda's demands, and the probabilities are that he will return to Tangier without having gained any but the least important points of the questions he has gone to Court to settle. With regard to the attitude of

the other Powers represented in Morocco little need be said. England and Germany are for keeping the *status quo*, as is no doubt France, and any attempt to upset it would be looked upon very seriously by those two Powers. There is no reason to believe that France wants to bring about a crisis in Morocco, and Spain has not the power to do so even if she did wish it. No exterior influence, in spite of the unnecessary alarm caused by France's move in the Sahara, is at present disturbing the country to any serious extent. With regard to internal struggles, we have been scared by the English and French press with rumours of "holy wars." It is a curious fact that whenever a newspaper turns its attention to the desert it discovers the rudiments of a "holy war" as assuredly as it does sand.

But even in North Africa and the Sahara the days of "holy wars" are waning, and the Arab and Berber of the desert have discovered that it is more profitable to sit at home and guard their families, their property, and their flocks and herds, than to go and attempt to exterminate the Christian, especially when the Christian is armed with Maxim guns and magazine-rifles. Nor do these desert people play fair, for those who don't obey the summons loot the belongings of those who have gone away to fight during their absence. Thus it was in 1859-1860, when the Spaniards were invading Northern Morocco, the desert tribes who had proclaimed a "jehad" and were marching toward the scene of action were so pillaged by their fellow-countrymen and co-religionists through whose country they were passing, that they were obliged to return, robbed of all their horses and arms, to their homes. Here again disappointment awaited them, for those who had remained behind in the desert, imagining that their fellow-tribesmen could never return, had annexed the greater part of the absentees' property, including, in many cases, their women folk. That "holy war," at all events, was not altogether a success, and it is still too fresh in the memory of their elders to instil much desire on the part of the fighting men to undertake another. As a matter of fact, the rumours and reports are without foundation. The desert tribes of Morocco will be careful not to interfere with the French as long as they remain where they are at present, and even if an advance should be made—and there is no reason to believe that such will be the case—it is not improbable that, after one attempt at resistance, these tribes will follow the example of the Igli people, and invite the invaders to occupy their country.

There is little else to be said with regard to the present condition of Morocco, which, on the whole, is as satisfactory—or as unsatisfactory — as ever, and likely to remain so for a considerable time to come. All speculation as to its future is useless, for the eventual fate of the country will either be decided at the time of a Euro-

pean war, or in a conference of the European Powers. In the former case it will probably be the fortunate country not engaged in warfare who will take advantage of the warring of nations to settle the Morocco Question as she may please. In the latter case there is no knowing what may be decided, for should Morocco come before a European conference it is certain that it would be only one of a number of leading questions, and would be treated as such—that is to say, that any Power might resign what rights she might think herself entitled to in deciding the fate of Morocco in exchange for privileges elsewhere, which would eventually be likely to prove more beneficial. Morocco, geographically and ethnologically, is an extension of the French colony of Algeria, and as such France certainly has predominating rights. Provided neutrality of the Straits of Gibraltar was strictly guaranteed, and a commercial treaty which allowed of a certain freedom of trade to all nations entered upon, there is no possible reason why France should not possess the country. England has no intention of taking it, and no object in doing so, provided always the free passage of our navy and merchantmen is not interfered with in the Straits. That any part of it should fall into the hands of Spain, whose Government is not far removed above that of Morocco, must be prevented at any cost. Spain certainly could not do much in the way of conquest for herself, but it is just possible that an undue and unnecessary jealousy between France and England might facilitate her taking up a position on the Straits.

But whatever happens, we can rest certain of one thing, that when the Morocco Crisis really does arrive, it will settle itself. Till then it is only the Morocco Scare.

OUR OFFICERS.

PEOPLE in England have watched the operations of the war in South Africa with the most profound and, as a rule, not unintelligent interest. They have, upon the whole, exhibited singular moderation and sobriety in the expression of the feelings which have been aroused, and, when things have gone amiss, have refused to be led into harsh immediate sentence upon the soldiers whom they have employed in the field and the administrators who were in office at home. They have recognised that a campaign must have its ups and downs, and that circumstances may sometimes be too strong for the most perfect organisation, the best conceived plan of action. But although they have been content in the meantime to stand the hazard of their military condition as it is, they have none the less resolved that the whole fighting force of the country must be revised in many details. They have seen that, in all warlike essentials, the English empire lacks nothing; but that, whether from parsimony or from other causes, these essentials have not hitherto been utilised to the utmost extent, and that a certain loss of power has been the consequence.

In the organising of our "new model" army that is to be, a great deal of public attention will be paid to its officering. Now, there is a certain school of would-be military critics in England, voicing their opinions pretty loudly in the press, who say very hard things about the gentlemen who now hold commissions—asserting that they have failed to rise to the level of recent situations; that they are, as a rule, incapable and ignorant of their duties; that they are more devoted to their amusements than to their profession; and it is further thrown in their teeth that many supposed shortcomings arise from their being wealthy and aristocratic. Our future military organisers, therefore, will very likely be noisily pressed to make sweeping alterations in the methods of providing officers for our army, and to introduce sumptuary regulations of a most stringent description in their regimental life. Well, it may at once be conceded that our system of officering the army is not perfect. Nothing in this world is so. But, in making alterations, it behoves us to "gang warily," lest, in pruning away what is evil, we may deprive ourselves of much that is superlatively good.

It is well to ask ourselves, therefore, whether there is not a very sufficient answer to each of these counts in a general indictment, whether, as practical considerations, any of them really have any weight, and whether, on the contrary, England ought not to congratulate herself on having a class of servants who, in general merit, have no superiors in any of the

world's military forces. Has the body of our officers failed us in any detail? Mistakes may have been made, mischances may have occurred, and it may even be allowed that, on some occasions, there have been grievous oversights. Is it to be supposed, however, that, in an enormous army before an enemy, things are never to go wrong, that every individual who is employed is never to show any human weakness, any human shortcomings? It may be permitted to draw an analogy from the accidents of another profession which is certainly distinguished by its extreme care in its work. The 'British Medical Journal' of the 28th April tells how, in one very serious class of operations, it has often happened that instruments, sponges, and other foreign bodies have been by oversight left by the operator in the human frame after the wound that he has made has been closed up,—with what grim results the necropsies have proved. If it is acknowledged that surgeons, working coolly at an operating-table, with presumably every scientific advantage and assistance at hand, are liable to such ghastly mischance, is it to be wondered at that the minds of soldiers may now and then fail to grasp some detail which ought apparently to be so important that it cannot be passed unnoticed? And the circumstances of military oversights are often not sufficiently considered. The responsible man is probably by no means in a normal condition. It is more than likely that he is extremely fatigued, worn and harassed by want of sleep and by long-continued anxiety, short of food and drink, besides being exposed to the somewhat distracting influence of whistling bullet and shrieking shell. Truly the wonder is, not that mistakes are made in action, but that so few mistakes are made; and the critic should remember that his own judgment and powers of mind might not be very cool and acute under similar circumstances.

But, to come to the definite allegations so often brought forward, let us begin by seeing if there is a want of capacity among our officers. Certainly, if there is a marked want of initial capacity, it does not say much for the mental power of the educated classes in England. All officers have had to pass into the army by a competitive examination open to the whole country, and in late years we have seen as many as four hundred individuals competing for a hundred vacancies. The examination may not, as some people think, have been on the most sensible lines; but at any rate the passing of it involved considerable exertion, and could not be accomplished by the fool of the family. Then, during an officer's whole service, he is constantly passing through special courses of instruction, besides performing the ordinary routine duties of his profession. He is called upon to have at least a good working acquaintance with signalling, pioneering, and the use of explosives, surveying, fortification, and, in the mounted services, veterinary practice.

Besides these subjects there are many officers who have a very practical familiarity with various forms of knowledge. We have heard the story how, when a troop-train engine broke down in the Egyptian desert, to the utter discomfiture of the driver, a young Guardsman unexpectedly came to the rescue, readjusted the machinery, and triumphantly drove the engine to its destination. There is no lack of thirst for knowledge either in her Majesty's army, and the opportunities for gaining it are eagerly seized. The privilege of two years' severe study at the Staff College (whether that study is on the best possible lines or not is now beside the mark) is keenly competed for, and many officers yearly qualify by voluntary study as interpreters of one or other of modern languages. But perhaps the most practical proof of our officers' mental power is the way in which a very large part of the country's business is carried on by men who either hold or have held commissions in the service. Our imperial administration draws upon them for consulates, magistracies, commissionerships, secretaryships, and residencies. The police and prison departments hold ex-soldiers as some of their best officials, and military titles are very common among the managers of successful private business organisations and agencies of all kinds, both at home and in the colonies. Soldiers, too, hold no mean place in literature, and they must have some ability with the pen, for, without taking thought of the great names of old, it is an open secret that each successive occupant of 'Maga's' editorial chair has always made a point of carefully and especially considering any communication from a military contributor, even if previously unknown, wide experience having taught them that when a soldier writes he has generally a worthy subject and at least a passable style.

So much for the capacity of our officers. Are they then so uninstructed and so ignorant of their duties that their natural capacity has not free scope, and may be altogether discounted? Let us begin with the subordinate leaders, the men of regiments, battalions, and batteries, who play a comparatively minor part in the great movements of a campaign. Are we to suppose that they are merely ornamental members of the military profession? Is it not the case that they and they alone[1] have

[1] It may be said, "What about the non-commissioned officers? Have they nothing to do with the making of a corps?" No doubt they give most valuable assistance, but it is only assistance, not initiative. Non-commissioned officers, in these days of short service, are necessarily often very young indeed, and, able and devoted to duty as they are, the responsibility of their effective training, equally with that of the private soldiers, falls as a constantly recurring duty upon the commissioned officers. There are, of course, a certain number of old and experienced non-commissioned officers to be found in every corps, but certainly not more than sufficient to give an example to their younger comrades and to fill positions of trust involving special routine work. They do not make the corps, though they are unquestionably an invaluable part of its strength.

formed, trained, and disciplined the fighting units to which they belong? A regiment, battalion, or battery is not a concourse of fortuitous atoms. It has not, like Topsy, "growed," but every man, horse, and gun has been the object of the minutest and most prolonged care. And, besides the actual purely military training of the men—a matter requiring no little patience, perseverance, and aptitude in these days of scientific weapons and the cultivation of individual intelligence—the regimental officers must receive the fullest credit for the super-excellent *moral* of the various corps. Never have British soldiers shown themselves in a brighter light than in recent war; and the coolness, cohesion, discipline, and devotion that they have displayed are not everyday qualities, but are the result of superior personal influence exerted over a long period of time. It is the deep interest, the constant and friendly supervision of the officers, that have made our soldiers what they are. Every company or squadron commander, every battery leader, has known and studied each individual man under him, his disposition and his peculiarities, and has moulded him into the trusty warrior who will follow unhesitatingly in battle. It must, indeed, be admitted that the state of the different corps in the British army shows that the regimental officers as a rule not only know their work, but do their work in a manner that leaves nothing to be desired. It may be said, and partially admitted, that the teaching has been to some extent on wrong lines; but it is to be remembered that Great Britain has been the first among nations to wage war on a large scale under modern conditions, that we are encountering a completely new order of military circumstances, and that for tactical purposes there have been no precedents for guidance. The knowledge that our soldiers had previously acquired has naturally proved to be insufficient, and has had to be supplemented by the stern training of a novel kind of war.

Then for the general staff. These officers have accomplished one of the most marvellous feats in military history, and accomplished it too with so little friction, so few hitches and mistakes, that its merit has not made so much impression as it deserves. An army of 200,000 men has been mobilised, embarked, transported 6000 miles over seas, then, on landing, has been moved many hundreds of miles in detachments to various widely separated scenes of operations, and placed in front of the enemy, equipped in every particular. No men have lacked food, ammunition, tents, and supplies; organisation has been complete. Regiment after regiment, battalion after battalion, battery after battery, has moved into order of battle with the regularity of a Cook's excursion. And few people consider what this means, what a mastery of detail is involved, what unremitting and intelligent toil in carrying out the logistics of war, what an acute appreciation of the value

of various sources of supply, of the various methods of transport. The mere drawing up of time-bills for railways consisting of single lines of rails, with halting- and feeding-places, would have taxed the best energies of the most experienced traffic managers. And that this has been done as it has been done is the more to be admired, because the general staff of our army has had few or no opportunities of working together. Officers have been hurriedly gathered from many stations, from every variety of employment, and told to form a great working organisation. They were in many cases strangers to each other. Superiors did not know the capacity of inferiors, and inferiors were unacquainted with the character and methods of superiors. Certainly there must have been among all no lack of knowledge and capacity, if their success has been so complete. And be it remembered also that they have not been cogs in the wheel of a national machine, long prepared for a definite and well-studied emergency: but, through no fault of their own, they have had to adapt themselves to places in an improvised organisation; they have had to work with materials possibly supplied in abundance, but supplied often in wrong sequence, and not always of the most satisfactory description; and they have found their scene of operations in a country practically unknown, where the most formidable physical obstacles were to be encountered. It is very likely that even the much-vaunted German general staff might, under similar circumstances, have been found wanting in some details of administration and direction.

The fierce light that beats upon an army's generals in these days of rapid posts, telegraphic communication, and crowds of special correspondents, has undoubtedly seemed to show that some of our officers in important commands have not displayed great mastery of strategy and tactics. We must not forget, however, that one story is only convincing until another is heard, and there are a good many other stories which have yet to come before us when impartial and cool history is written, perhaps with the effect of very much altering our original impressions of events. In any case, however, why should we be gravely disappointed and mortified because we find that every general in our service has not supreme genius in war? We know that it is not every able public man who has the capacity to be a great statesman, and one must search through many excellent horsemen before one can find a first-class jockey. A general may well be a most admirable lieutenant under the eye of a superior, and yet be quite unable to act for himself. How many of Wellington's generals could he trust when they were removed from his own supervision? and how many of Napoleon's brilliant galaxy of marshals, though no men had more experience of war, were really competent to be anything but pawns in the

game played by their great master? Let us think of Crawford's operations on the Coa, and of Ney's disaster at Dennewitz. If, too, some of our officers have apparently not done all that could have been expected from them, have not a very sufficient number shown the highest capacity, the most marked individual merit, both when acting independently and when taking a subordinate part in a great operation? Is there not a long roll of men to whom the nation is grateful for distinguished and successful service? And, truly, we may not be far wrong if we trace the failures that have been commented upon in great measure to evil fortune as much as to anything else. Before giving a man an appointment, Napoleon asked, "Est il heureux?" He at least recognised that fate has more to do with success than many people are willing to believe.

The mastery of no profession can be gained from books alone, and least of all that of a soldier. Constant personal practice is required, and the habit of preparation to meet any contingency. The searching training of actual war is the best; but this cannot fall to the lot of every one before he is called upon to lead in battle. We know, however, that a very good substitute may be found in the peace manœuvres of troops, as nearly as possible under war's conditions. Every military nation is convinced of this, and yearly exercises its legions in an elaborate representation of active service. No one can question the enormous professional benefit that these manœuvres bring to their officers and men: skill, endurance, and ready wit are both taught and tested. What has England done in this direction for her soldiers,—or rather, we may say, how much has she left undone? Very few of our officers, and especially our cavalry officers, have had sufficient opportunity of practising or seeing practised in the field the methods of warfare that they have been taught in the closet.[1] Except in India there has never been space and liberty of action conceded to them, in which they could move troops in accordance with the exigencies of modern tactics. Of course we have had Berkshire manœuvres, Irish manœuvres, Wiltshire manœuvres, &c., besides the regular instructional drills in the little cockpit at Aldershot. As far as they went they were extremely useful, but how far did they go? They occurred but seldom, and

[1] The writer of this paper feels that he must in some sort apologise for the appearance of many of his paragraphs, as they are identical in aim and general idea with passages in the very able article on "Surprises in War" contributed by Major-General F. S. Russell to the June number of 'Maga.' His excuse must be that he was not aware Major-General F. S. Russell was writing on the subject, and his paper was in the hands of 'Maga's' Editor before "Surprises in War" was published. The subject treated of is, however, so important that iteration of argument may be pardoned in the interests of England's army. With the kind acquiescence, therefore, of the Editor, the writer has decided to allow this paper to be printed as it was originally written.

comparatively few regiments had a chance of taking part in them. The concentration of troops caused some expenditure, and the expense was not easily sanctioned. Then the manœuvre space was terribly confined. Two problems were always present to the minds of the officers employed — first, how troops were to be used according to the exigencies and rules of war; and second, how their movements were to be restricted within the limits of the recognised area, and how they were to avoid places especially tabooed. The second problem was indeed often the most difficult of solution. In every strategic movement, in every mimic battle or skirmish, there was therefore of necessity an immense amount of make-believe, and it was nearly always impossible to say whether an officer had or had not acted intelligently as a soldier; whether he had failed in an operation because circumstances not purely military were against him, or whether any success that he claimed might be due to manœuvre conditions hampering his opponent rather than to his own strategical or tactical dispositions. And what applied to the officers applied equally, though perhaps in a less degree, to the non-commissioned officers and men. How, for instance, could a small patrol or individual scouts do their work really well when, if they moved through a turnip-field or entered a wood, they were at once ridden at by an excited umpire, who told them that they were transgressing some law, not of war but of manœuvre, and that they must go elsewhere? Very possibly the object which they had in view was thus entirely and irremediably defeated.

It is true that there must always be difficulties in preparing sufficiently ample manœuvring grounds in our islands, —a dense population, high cultivation, and, above all, and most important of all, the presence of game. Damages to property and crops could, however, almost always be provided for. They cannot amount to an impossible sum when the harvest is over; but unfortunately the season for field-sports is only then beginning, and many men who have shooting privileges in field and covert will not allow these privileges to be interfered with on any terms. In connection with this, however, it is very much a question whether the amount of damage done to a shooting by troops passing over it once or twice, or even discharging a few rounds of blank cartridge, is not very much overestimated by many sportsmen. Pheasants might certainly be scattered a little, and some might be lost; partridges would be disturbed, but a few days' quiet and a little trouble on the part of keepers would bring the pheasants back to their homes, and partridges would soon settle down again. It is probable that, at the end of the season, the number of head accounted for would not be found to be greatly diminished because Tommy Atkins had had some lessons on the shooting-ground.

A Manœuvre Act has been

passed by Parliament, but so recently that we have not been able to see whether, as it stands, it will have so much permanent effect or will be sufficiently widely applied to give, in our next interval of peace, to our army at home, and especially to our cavalry, the opportunities that have been hitherto wanting of thoroughly training themselves in the most important duties of their profession. At the present time England has only herself to thank if, on plunging into a serious war, she has found that some of her fighting men who were trained at home have a too meagre acquaintance with the tricks of fence that can only be acquired by long and assiduous practice. The soldiers were ready and eager to learn; but they were practically told that their wealthy country could not afford the expense of concentrating them in armies for instruction, and that the preservation of game was more important than training the defenders of the lands' honour and interests. They say that the old barber-surgeons were taught how to let blood by puncturing the veins of a cabbage-leaf. Suppose the teacher had said, "But I can't afford to give you a cabbage-leaf for practice," there would have been small wonder if the subsequent attempts at phlebotomy had been more distinguished for audacity than skill. And this is precisely the line that England has taken with regard to the war-training of her army. If there have been some tactical errors in the field, she herself must in all justice accept a portion of the blame. Further emphasis is given to this point by the very evident fact that all the duties which officers, non-commissioned officers, and men could learn and practise are most admirably performed. They are excellent riders and drivers, they are expert with their weapons, their discipline leaves nothing to be desired, and their *moral* is superb. If our army could have the facility for making itself as familiar with field-duties as it is with barrack-drill and interior economy, it would be as near perfection as is possible.

It has often been said that our officers are more devoted to their amusements than to their business. Well, this is an allegation more easy to make than to prove. We think that we have shown that the officers of the army must do a great deal of work,—doing it, too, very well; and if work is well done, it argues no little devotion in the worker. It is, indeed, impossible for any one who does not know the inner life of a corps to say whether any individual officer is or is not devoted to his profession. People in all walks of life have an aversion to talking "shop." A doctor, a lawyer, or a merchant does not, in conversation with a casual acquaintance or even an intimate friend, at once open his mind about his experiences in his vocation. Talk turns upon some subject of common interest, and not unlikely upon the

relaxations of life. Because a soldier, therefore, does not always talk about soldiering, it must not be inferred that he does not take a deep interest in the subject:—

"The officer is seen well dressed, smart, and *débonnaire* at social gatherings. He takes his place in the hunting-field, on the cricket-ground, and in other scenes of sport. He probably takes a keen interest in the occupation of the moment, and says little or nothing of his professional life to the civilians whom he meets. The conclusion is at once arrived at that he is a mere butterfly, a man with no serious business in life. But it is seldom known that the gentlemen who are taking things so easily in the afternoon have probably already done a very good day's work. They have been on foot or in the saddle from an hour in the morning when most men of business are still in bed. After a dusty and fatiguing parade they have paid their companies or troops, inspected horses and arms, attended at the orderly-room, sat on courts-martial or boards, visited mess-rooms, taken stock of kits, and seen to the qualities of dinners. The man who is seen day by day taking a determined line across country, or thoroughly enjoying himself with rod or gun, has just returned from a long exile in India or some colony, where he has been guarding British interests under conditions that only an enthusiast in his career would put up with, and very probably to the serious detriment of his health and constitution. The contingent from the nearest barracks, which joins the hunting-field or takes its part in some other sport, are men who are enjoying a holiday; and, except under very unusual circumstances, holidays are the exception and not the rule. It is more than likely that such holidays are earned by working extra long hours on other days, and utilising the morning and evening hours of the holiday itself to get through necessary duties."[1]

If they are to be healthy-minded, men must have some amusements. Young men certainly should have them, and the longer they can keep them up as years roll over their heads, the better it will be for them. And the amusements that our officers chiefly seek are eminently manly and healthy, demanding and cultivating mental and physical powers of a high order. The sports of the field, and polo, cricket, racquets, &c., all go to develop qualities of mind and body that are priceless in war. If anybody would like to see it proved to demonstration how valuable a military training hunting, for example, ought to be, let him read 'Pink and Scarlet,' or 'Hunting as a School for Soldiering,' by Colonel Alderson, one of our best officers of mounted infantry, who is now in South Africa engaged in his fifth campaign. Again, in the most useful little handbook that has lately been given to the British army—'Aids to Scouting,' by Colonel (now deservedly Major-General) Baden-Powell, the hero of the hour in England—it will be at once seen how many valuable lessons the gallant author has learned from the big game shooting with which he has beguiled his leisure in past years. The great Wellington, the exemplar of all military virtues, kept a pack of foxhounds even when in the field in the Peninsula, and shot and hunted regularly till very late in his busy and patriotic life.

There is always a danger,

[1] "About Soldiers, by a Soldier," in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for June 1892.

doubtless, that the pursuit of active games and sport as a relaxation may be in some instances carried almost to excess, but this is quite unavoidable. The men who have the peculiar physical and mental gifts that make the most brilliant horsemen, shots, or cricketers must inevitably be drawn by outside circumstances into much practice of the pursuits in which they are past-masters, and may seem to devote a great deal of time to them, but "whatever is worth doing is worth doing well," and it is an incontestable advantage to have some individuals who can establish a high standard in any occupation worthy of a man. After all, it does not follow that these individuals, therefore, neglect the duties of their profession (*e.g.*, there are few better men in the hunting-field than Lord Roberts; Colonel Thorneycroft is one of the army champion racquet-players; Major Poore is in the very first class as a cricketer; Captain Campbell, 9th Lancers, who has distinguished himself in reconnaissance, has twice ridden the winner of the Grand Military and once of the Grand National), and the great body of our officers, though no doubt deeply interested in their amusements, indulge in them with sobriety and moderation. It is well worth remembering also, when we are considering the active amusements which it is our pride to think the birthright of every Englishman and special factors in the wholesome strength of our race, how our present enemy has shown us that a free open-air life engaged in the primitive pursuits of hunting, herding, and agriculture may be at least as good a training for a campaign as much poring over text-books of strategy and tactics, and long experience in the theoretical handling of armed bodies of men. War is the most primitive of trades, and, given equal arms, the warrior whose previous life has been most primitive may not unlikely be the best. Our national life is very far from primitive, and everything that makes for the fighting qualities of primitive man in our soldiers should be cultivated rather than denounced.

Our officers have been depreciatingly called aristocratic and wealthy. Even if this was the case, is there any reason why men of good social position and large means should be discouraged from serving their country? They enter the service through a door equally open to every one in the country, and do not owe their commissions to any special favour. But men of good birth are to be found in all professions, and only a very small percentage of those whose names are in the army list can be called wealthy. The large majority have only sufficient means to meet the necessary expenses. And it is a rare thing indeed when a young man can live in any profession upon its emoluments alone. The army differs from all other professions, in that it gives only to a very few of its most successful members, and that late in life, a competent

maintenance. Some means a man must have if he is to serve his country as a soldier, for he has to provide his own uniform, horses, equipment, &c., besides paying for the regimental band and many other items which the public little wots of. Each change of quarters, for instance, costs even single officers £5 or £10, and the attendance at a camp of exercise causes very considerable extra outlay. Private means, too, are not by any means all selfishly spent. How is it supposed that all the clubs and benevolent institutions for the men, which are to be found in every corps, are kept up, except from the pockets of the officers? The necessity for the command of some money is not peculiar to officers in the regular army. There are no yeomanry, militia, or volunteer regiments in which a man can serve as an officer without finding that he has to pay largely for the privilege, even after he thinks he has balanced his military budget. Few regiments in the reserve forces would continue long to exist in peace-time if it was not for the expenditure of the officers.

Wealth is certainly not a common feature of the army; but of those men who do possess an ample income, may it not be said that it is very much to their credit that they, with every temptation to indulgence, should "scorn delights and live laborious days" in their country's service. It is very well known that some of the hardest-working and most enthusiastic soldiers in the army are men whose private means would enable them to live a luxurious independent existence untrammelled by any calls of duty, and it is obvious of how great an advantage to the service is the presence of such men in its ranks. The word luxurious reminds one of another piece of claptrap that is very freely made use of. The luxury of regimental life is often condemned. Now, a man who lives in one small and sparely furnished barrack-room can hardly be called a Sybarite in his lodging, and any one who lives with a good regiment for a week will see much more of asceticism than dissipation at the mess. Public opinion emphatically condemns anything like extravagance or excess, and the wild revelry told of in fiction is entirely extinct, if indeed it ever really existed. Life nowadays is a very serious business both in work and play, and few men can afford to jeopardise their nerve and vigour by over-indulgence of any kind.

It may be that public entertainments by officers have in recent years been too lavish; but hospitality is a venial fault, and easily corrected. And the correcting may well be done by the British public itself. Many people who go to the Derby, Ascot, Sandown, or other great gatherings, never think of taking, as in old days, their own refreshments. They will say, "Oh, the —th will give us luncheon"; and sure enough the table of her Majesty's —th is surrounded by a crowd of hungry and thirsty sorners, most of whom have no

kind of connection with the regiment, and are only anxious to profit greedily by its open-heartedness. If the guests were limited to old comrades and near relations, there would be little talk of the expenses of race luncheons. There seems to be no reason why, if a man in the army has money, he should not be allowed to spend it as he would be allowed in any other profession, as long as he does not drag others into expense, and as long as the general cost of living in a corps is confined within reasonable limits. It is the fact that in most corps, at any rate, the obligatory expenditure is adapted to the means of poor men.

It is, and has long been, evident that there are in some regiments, and especially in some cavalry regiments, forms of expenditure which may well be curtailed to the benefit of the corps, without in any way encroaching upon the reasonable independence of individuals; but it is very doubtful, indeed, whether a revolutionary change in the present system of life among our officers would be of real benefit to the country, to the class of men most concerned, or to the army itself as a whole. If England makes up her mind, however, that she wants to make the army a profession for very poor men, and thus necessarily for them alone, because men of means would be precluded from spending their money, she must herself begin by undertaking an enormous annual outlay in increased pay and allowances, in providing chargers, equipment, and many other things with which she does not now concern herself. It is very doubtful whether even then she would succeed, for she can never make the army a paying career in life such as any other. She would only arrive at having very expensive servants instead of very cheap ones, and would she be better served?

It is, we are inclined to think, the truth that the outcry against many matters connected with the life of our officers is the outcome in great part of ignorance, and possibly in some degree of envy. They belong to a proud profession, which gives them many social advantages, and affords opportunities for many pleasures which cannot so easily be found in civil life, where *camaraderie* is necessarily lacking. But of those who glibly deprecate the privileges that the army now gives, how many take thought of the medal's reverse — the long years of exile, the not infrequent interludes of rough life and hardship even in peace-time, and the chances of want, wounds, disease, and death in war, —though perhaps the officers themselves might say that these last chances, gilded as they are with honour, are among their best prerogatives.

There is no doubt that the Englishmen who now seek for commissions are ready to submit to any trials, to go through any training, to acquire any qualifications, that will make them efficient and trustworthy servants of the State. Let any

path of duty be pointed out to them and they will follow it. But if an overwhelming and victorious clamour is raised that we must have officers who are mere and only professional soldiers, who are to have no opportunities of widely mixing with the world and joining in the pursuits of English gentlemen, we shall be parlously near to being provided with pedants, who in their spare moments might be thrown back on something too much resembling the crapulous café-haunting life which is often the lot of the commissioned ranks in Continental armies.

There is one form of criticism that has never been brought, and never can be brought, against our officers. No one has dared to gainsay their magnificent pluck, determination, and endurance. Could we ever find men whom the rank and file—and they are pretty good critics too—will more willingly follow and obey in times of difficulty and danger? Our experience shows that at any rate our soldiers are led in a manner that inspires confidence. Much must therefore be said in favour of our present system of officering our army, which gives us the services of men so gallant, so devoted, so chivalrous, and so little of carpet-knights.

A VILLAGE IN THE VAL D'OR.

BY MRS P. G. HAMERTON.

VISIT THE FIRST.

PERHAPS the Val d'Or, like the Côte d'Or, owes its alluring name to the golden grapes of world renown which yield the famous Burgundy wine, and perhaps also to the gold brought to the pockets of its inhabitants by these same grapes — both golden and blue-black; for the quality of the black grapes is equal to that of the white ones, and they are more extensively cultivated.

The village I am about to describe is Le Bourgneuf. On the other side of the Val d'Or is another village — Mercurey; and the two are separated by a small river called by the inhabitants "la rivière du Bourgneuf" whose real name, however, is l'Entonnoir. The source is above Charrecey at a little distance, and after a short run it dashes into a precipice and disappears under the hill, to come to the light again at Mercurey. But this reappearance is not admitted by the popular mind, as one is told that "l'Entonnoir *se perd* sous la montagne."

Both villages are surrounded by vineyards, which clothe the ground almost entirely from the valley to the very summits of the two steep hills which shut them in, and which are both crowned by Romanesque churches of the ninth century. But whilst Le Bourgneuf stretches itself placidly into a sort of long street, Mercurey scales the hill on its side, and scatters its gay-looking houses and gardens on the slope, and groups them about the old church, high above the Val.

The villages are small, the culture of the vines requiring only a limited number of hands, and the people generally live in their own inherited houses — ignoring modern comforts, or disdainful of them. In such a place it is difficult to get lodgings; but I was fortunate enough to find an apartment to let in the château at Mercurey. This château Mypont, like so many others in France after the great Revolution, had passed from the nobility to the *bourgeoisie*. One of its former owners, whose tombstone is still to be seen inside the church of Mercurey, had been Messire Marie-Paisceaud-de-Chasselas, Écuyer du Roy, Seigneur de Mercurey. The name of this seigneur is most curious — obviously a nickname — for *paisceau* is the prop of a vine, and *chasselas* a kind of grape, so that the meaning is "a prop for grapes." How the Écuyer du Roy, or his family before him, came by it, I have been unable to ascertain. The château Mypont now belongs to Monsieur L., a vine-grower, who has divided the buildings

into separate apartments which he lets, whilst the grounds are devoted to the culture of different kinds of vines, with the exception of a vast and delightful old-fashioned garden, a terrace with noble horse-chestnut trees, and a meadow beyond it.

I was told that *the* château, as it was usually called without any other denomination, dated from the year 1535, and had been rebuilt in 1719; but there were few remains of interest, with the exception of some delicately carved and gilt woodwork, and painted panels in the style of Watteau over three of the mantelpieces, and other paintings in camaïeu surmounting some of the doors.

As soon as our boxes were unpacked we asked our obliging landlady to advise us about a *femme de ménage*, for we knew too well how servants resent a change of habits, and how ungraciously they refuse to adapt themselves to a change of circumstances, to have brought one with us. Mme. L. said that maid-servants were difficult to find in the Val d'Or, particularly when the vines were in good condition and promising, because almost every family possesses a vineyard—were it only one *ouvrée* (which contains 428 square mètres); and, although the digging is never done by women, they are required for some of the work too delicate for the hands of man. In the spring, when the vines reach a certain height from the ground, every plant must be fastened to a substantial prop, called *paisceau*, with osier-twigs which are at once strong and yielding; and in the summer-time the young shoots, sending their tendrils in all directions, have to be secured delicately with straw to avoid bruising them. Women must be at hand to do this work when the time comes, not only in their own vineyards, or in those of which their husbands are *vignerons*, but also in those of the largest vine-growers, whose *vigneronnes* could not achieve it rapidly enough.

However, Mme. L. said that we could easily find a *femme de ménage* to come and stay sufficiently long for our wants—provided she were allowed to go home at meal-times, and at night to sleep. Girls of the working class enjoy a great deal of liberty there. They are constantly out of doors, know everybody, and laugh and joke with every passer-by. They often dance at night, for it is a custom of the place to grant free entrance to all the balls which take place at the hotel—even to private ones, such as those given at a wedding-feast. The consequence is that the idea of domestic service, with its restrictions and subordination, is hateful to them. So we followed Mme. L.'s advice, and arranged with a girl to do our work for the time of our stay.

There remained a difficulty about the preparation of meals, for our girl Gladie only knew how to make soup, and perhaps an omelette, or thick pancakes—the ordinary food of the *vignerons*

requiring no great culinary skill, though it is both good of its kind and nourishing. In the morning many eat *gaudes*, a porridge made of Indian-corn flour mixed with milk, or a *soupe-maigre* with cream, then curds, or goat's cheese, or a peculiar kind, home-made, called *fromage-fort*—a well-deserved name, for I have never seen a woman partake of it. It is made of dried curds and old goat's cheese kept in wood-ashes for a year, the two grated and mixed together with salt, pepper, brandy, and sometimes garlic. These ingredients being put into an earthen pot, the goat's cheese acts as leaven, and fermentation begins. When it has subsided, the whole presents the appearance of yellowish, sticky, strong-smelling, curdled cream—far from appetising in my opinion, which is not, however, that of a great many male Burgundians. White wine is the general beverage at breakfast. For the midday dinner there is often salt pork (cured at home), boiled with different kinds of vegetables—cabbages, potatoes, turnips, beans, carrots, or peas—the broth being utilised for soup in the evenings. As a change, the wives prepare occasionally a *ragoût-de-mouton*, sometimes a *pot-au-feu* for Sunday dinner; and the people thereabout being extremely sociable, they invite each other frequently, and do not mind sacrificing ducks, fowls, geese, pigeons, or rabbits in honour of their guests. Large quantities of salads, radishes, and fruit are eaten in their season, and eggs, milk, curds and cream throughout the year.

Mercurey produces vast quantities of fruits—apples, pears, cherries, apricots, almonds, nuts, and medlars; but its peaches are deservedly renowned. They are grown as hardy fruit in the vineyards, and receive the sun's rays without shelter of any kind: the warm showers of thunderstorms (very frequent there) wash the dust from their velvet coats, whilst the soft summer breezes soon dry off all moisture, leaving them at last in the perfection of their delicious ripeness and purple-hued beauty. These are the edible peaches: there is another sort called white ones, used for making brandy, but seldom eaten, being greatly inferior to the red kind. Although both were scarce, comparatively speaking, the year we came to Mercurey, on account of late frosts, we were offered of the best kind as much as we could consume at a very moderate price—sevenpence a *quarteron* (quarter of a hundred). Truly they were rather small, but delicious nevertheless.

After due reflection, we fancied that we might get out of a difficulty by ordering our meals at the hotel, and we decided to do so. It was well, however, for the hotel-keeper that the place did not boast of a rival house, for his own was kept in the most whimsical manner. I had been requested to send Gladie there every morning to inquire what would be the dishes for the day, in order to choose from them; but she was often told at 10 A.M.

that "they did not know yet what there would be"—though they had a *table d'hôte de pensionnaires* at half-past eleven. At other times the lady at the head of the establishment coolly informed the girl that there would be "nothing," the *chef* having to prepare a great repast, such as a wedding-breakfast, or a corporation dinner, or else because he was away ministering to wants more exacting than our simple ones, and no doubt more lucrative. In such cases the *hôtelière* complained of having enough to do with the home-work without anything outside of it. It happened also several times that we waited and waited in vain for the appearance of the *garçon* in the courtyard; then I resolutely marched off to the hotel and claimed what I had ordered. "Had they forgotten us? . . . we were ravenously hungry." "*Ah! bien sûr que non!* they had not forgotten us, but the servants had been busy, till it was time for *their déjeuner*, and now our own lunch would be sent as soon as theirs was over." And when it came at last it was more than an hour late. On two or three occasions they admitted, without the slightest apology, that it had been overlooked altogether. It became, therefore, necessary to provide against these emergencies, and as Mme. L. kindly lent us a charcoal-stove, with a box for fuel, a pair of tongs, and a shovel, we were henceforward secured against famine. The stove was established on the landing, before a window; we set up a large clean board over one of our trunks for a table, and with the help of a few nails to hang towels and pans upon, we had a perfect camp-kitchen, and felt proudly independent of forgetful hotel-keepers and lazy *garçons*.

As I became better acquainted with the Val d'Oriens, I noticed a general pleasant expression of satisfaction on their countenances, which rather surprised me, for, with a few exceptions amongst the vine-growers and wine-merchants, the population is poor in money—though not indigent or wanting in the necessaries of life. Despite the impoverishment resulting from the decay of their celebrated vineyards, they have retained the buoyancy of their spirits and a keen enjoyment of existence. Formerly the province of Burgundy had been in great prosperity owing to the production of its renowned wines, and both the vine-growers and the *vignerons* had been in the habit of enjoying a life of ease and plenty. These prosperous conditions no doubt made them what they are—even now after so much trouble and painful efforts—cheerful, light-hearted, sociable, and obliging, though they lack the pleasant politeness of the peasantry. They are proud and democratic, and assume towards every one a tone of familiarity which it is not always easy to repress without appearing harsh or self-asserting. A little incident which I witnessed may be given as an illustration: a lady of rank, who was driving in her carriage on the main road, stopped her coachman, and

addressing a *vigneron* at work close by, said, "Mon brave homme [my good man], what is the name of the village on the top of this hill?" "Ma brave femme, c'est Alluze, pour vous servir," he rejoined with a chuckle.

The *vignerons*, who represent almost exclusively the working class here, do not consider themselves as servants—in fact they are independent. In the majority of cases the agreement with the vine-growers is the following: the *vignerons* do not receive wages, and one proprietor may have several *vignerons*, according to the extent of his vineyards, each man being supposed to take care of forty, and in some cases fifty, *ouvrées*, with his wife. He has the use of a private cottage, ordinarily composed of two rooms; either a plot of ground for vegetables, or else if he, jointly with his wife, cultivates the proprietor's kitchen-garden, he has a right to provide for the wants of his household out of it. The woman keeps a cow and a pig, sometimes fowls, rabbits, and pigeons, and is allowed to take home the grass and herbage weeded from the vineyards, and also to grow dwarf beans on the outside slopes of the furrows' border-edges. She owes no domestic work to the proprietor: her sole duty is the fastening of the vines. Her husband digs the ground, manures it, keeps it free from weeds: he has, besides, to set up the props and prune the vines when required, and lastly, to superintend the vintage, of which one-half is his remuneration. This scheme has much to recommend it: it is fair to both parties. The one gives his work, and the other provides the ground already planted, the necessary manure, and the props or railings, according to the manner of cultivation. When railings are adopted, it is the new system called *en bandeaux:* the ground is ploughed with a special small plough between the lines, instead of being dug up. It is of course most probable that the working man, who takes his half of the proceeds, will do his best to make them as large as possible by his care and attention.

This scheme answered very well so long as the vines remained healthy and fruitful, but when they were successively, and then simultaneously, attacked by oïdium, mildew, blackrot, and phylloxera, and when the produce steadily diminished, the *vignerons*, and even the vine-growers, saw their means decreasing so rapidly that in the course of a few years many of the wealthy proprietors, whose fortune was entirely invested in their vineyards, were utterly ruined. For the vines had to be tended all the same, and the *vignerons*, now refusing to run the risk of the *à moitié* system, had to be paid wages, so that it became a great outlay for an inadequate return.

At first it was hoped that a remedy having been discovered against oïdium in the *Bouillie Bordelaise*, the vines might still be saved. But the increasing ravages of the phylloxera left no alternative—the

old stocks must be sacrificed, and the exhausted ground renovated by appropriate treatment. Then began the brave fight of the people against formidable odds: many dared not venture it, and had to sell their — now valueless — property, as they say, "pour un morceau de pain." Those who could manage to live upon a greatly diminished income, and still go to the necessary expenses for replanting, proceeded in this way: they had a certain proportion of their vines (those in the worst state) uprooted, burned, and the ground ploughed over and left to rest for a year. Next some kind of fodder—such as clover—was sown, and when ready to be cut, it was dug into the soil as manure for two successive years, after which young American vines (which resist the phylloxera) were planted, then grafted with choice French ones, and carefully tended for five years before they could yield anything worth calling a vintage. It might prove tedious were I to describe in detail the different processes resorted to for ensuring a good result: it is enough to say that seven years are required for the renovation of a vineyard—from the uprooting of the diseased stock to the first gathering of a vintage.

I owe these explanations to Monsieur L., who showed me in his grounds all the stages of the new culture; for besides cultivating his vineyards in full bearing, he was replanting and grafting others, and selling different kinds of vines, both American and French, for stocks and grafts. There was in the garden a lofty arch of trellis-work covered with an American vine, unpruned, to show its vigour and beauty. It climbs, when unrestrained, almost like the Virginia-creeper, and the size of its leaves is four times that of the French species. It gives no fruit—only some tiny green berries much smaller than those of the ivy: it makes splendid bowers.

As we were passing from one vineyard to another, Monsieur L. picked some of the ripest grapes for me to taste their different flavours. The large black berries for *vin ordinaire*, the small ones for *bon vin;* the white used for sparkling Burgundy; and a peculiar opaline muscat, of which the wine we drank habitually was made. We bought it from Monsieur L. at the price of fivepence a bottle, and thought it delicious.

The "École-Communale des filles" occupies one of the wings of the château, and on the 15th of August, which in Catholic countries is the fête-day of the Virgin Mary, and of so many females bearing her name, we noticed a procession of schoolgirls marching past our gates in good order. There was not the slightest difference between their dress and that of bourgeois children, though their parents were simply *vignerons*. Each of them was taking a bouquet of fresh flowers to the mistress of the school, and the youngest (as I learned later) was to offer a

very pretty clock as their joint present. Shortly afterwards Mademoiselle C. (the mistress), whom we had met now and then in the grounds, graciously brought us some of her nosegays, with an invitation to a *goûter en plein air* with her pupils, under the horse-chestnuts on the terrace—the proprietors having kindly allowed the use of it for the occasion. We accepted, and sat upon chairs together with several other ladies, whilst the children were ranged upon wooden benches, eagerly awaiting the beginning of the play—for a play was to be acted by the more advanced pupils.

The little actresses were dressing in a kiosk, from which they soon issued in tasteful costumes, and, with great determination of manner and mechanical gestures, went through their parts, to the delight and admiration—and perhaps envy also—of their younger schoolfellows.

The plaudits were loud and prolonged, and interrupted only by the appearance of two very large flat baskets, filled with cakes, and a capacious watering-can with wine. I wondered at the quantity of wine, but soon perceived that these little Burgundians would easily despatch it, for they quaffed a tumblerful with the utmost alacrity, and it being a very hot day, they were for replenishing it pretty often. They showed themselves the true descendants of parents who never mix wine with water, their theory being that the juice of the grape never does any harm to any one. They have also a humorous saying which they repeat frequently—

> "Les méchants sont buveurs d'eau,
> C'est bien prouvé par le Déluge."

However, I remarked with satisfaction that, after the first round, Mme. L. was wisely pouring a certain quantity of water into the can—enough to transform the beverage into *eau-rougie*. But it must be avowed that the requests for it slackened considerably from that moment.

Whatever may be said in favour of drinking wine pure and in great quantity, I am certain of its evil effects on the population, for although many of the people live to a very advanced age, they look worn out and decrepit long before death, and their limbs—especially the legs—are in many cases deformed by rheumatism. I know that the arduous labour in the vineyards, with the short-handled spade, bends their spine early and unavoidably; but the distortion of arms and legs is certainly the result of rheumatism produced by a long course of unrestrained wine-drinking, by themselves and their ancestors. It also seems to me that the health of children brought up in this keen and invigorating air, and allowed the freedom of constant outdoor exercise, ought to be robust—yet it is nothing of the sort; many are thin, pale-faced, and far from strong-looking. Why is it so, if not owing to some hereditary taint? I do not mean to imply that all the people are drunkards, and all

the children unhealthy, for it is very seldom indeed that outward signs of drunkenness are perceptible, and one often meets with children fresh and sound; but, nevertheless, I feel convinced that the consumption of wine is excessive in those parts, and also that too much importance is attached to good living generally. It has been said to me repeatedly and by different persons that they would not care to live in Paris, because their means would be insufficient for the comforts and luxuries they were enjoying in the Val d'Or, where living is cheap. "They would have to be sparing of their wines and could not afford the same qualities: poultry and game, as well as wood for fuel, would be beyond their possibilities, together with many other good things to which they were accustomed." It was in vain that I tried to oppose to these advantages those of a higher order so plentifully offered in a metropolis, such as museums, public libraries, concerts, and picture-galleries. The answer was that "they did very well without them." The fact is, they have no intellectual wants, no desire for culture; their only reading is in a daily newspaper and an occasional novel, and the topics of conversation are furnished by politics for men, and family matters with gossip for women.

In the Val d'Or no occasion for conviviality is neglected, even among the *bourgeoisie*, and indeed the inhabitants are so hospitably disposed that dinner-parties or *déjeuners-priés* are of frequent occurrence. At such festivities the fare is capital and the dishes numerous—the *maîtresses-de-maison* inheriting culinary skill from their mothers, and vying with each other in the practice of it, whilst their husbands take a pride in bringing out their best wines, which are duly appreciated. Once we were invited to a lunch, which was, as usual, very gay and the conversation animated—for if there is nothing æsthetic about the people, they are intelligent, talkative, and lively. One of the gentlemen was insisting on helping my mother to a glass of Volney, and could not understand why she declined such a rare luxury, so I had to tell him that my mother's doctor had forbidden her wine altogether. "Then," he exclaimed in great surprise, "that doctor does not know yet that wine is the milk for old age."

The Val d'Oriens are very obliging, and a gracious custom of theirs deserves to be mentioned: it is the hospitality offered on the occasion of a wedding by the residents to the guests, even if they be perfect strangers, and though they themselves are not invited. At Chalon-sur-Saône, a few kilometres from Le Bourgneuf, the *haute-bourgeoisie* send their private carriages to take wedding-parties to church and back again. I had many tokens of this obliging disposition of the people in my walks in search of new-laid eggs and clotted-cream. If Gladie was sent on such errands, she generally came back empty-handed, for

these rarities are bespoken by resident families and kept for them; but when I went personally, the *vigneronnes* were too polite to refuse, though they said laughingly, "It's to oblige you, this time, but don't come again." And whenever I again made my appearance I had the same reception, and they were glad of a chat with me. They often put a little sly humour in their sayings. One said of a delicate kind of vine about her door, "Elle gèle de peu"; and another cheeringly comforted me when I had to go away in the rain with, "C'est seulement des gouttes mal attachées."

My excursions in search of cream were necessitated by its scarcity in the village itself, for there are few milch-cows at Mercurey or in Le Bourgneuf owing to want of pastures. They are more generally kept on the hill-slopes, where there are—here and there—patches of grass, besides enclosed meadows. These small oases of green grass are always far apart, and well shaded by the dark and dense leafage of far-spreading walnut-trees, which, unlike other trees, thrive in this dry stony soil, and grow to magnificent proportions. It is curious that they should always be found in clumps of five or six on the same spot. The old women who look after the village goats always resort with their knitting to these shady retreats during the summer heats. They select a flat stone to sit upon, and, after laying their *sabots* aside, rest their bare feet in the velvety soft grass as in a cushion, and whilst with vigilant eyes they watch the dancing and bounding flock, the stocking in their hands lengthens slowly, but regularly. If any of the gamesome kids stray out of sight, the little brass horn at the woman's neck is sounded, and quickly brings back the runaway, jumping over shrubs and rocks. It is a picturesque sight the coming down-hill of these flocks in sobered procession when the twilight grows dim. They are guided by the horns of the ragged, old, witch-like women, each brandishing the knotty staff which now enforces order and submission, and now helps onwards her stiffened limbs.

As an amusing contrast, we sometimes watched the return of a single cow escorted by its master on a bicycle—the slowness of the animal's pace allowing its driver to show off his skill in a series of remarkable curves backwards and forwards. For now the bicycle has penetrated to the very heart of the Val d'Or, and may be seen tearing along the road, and madly careering down the steep hilly slopes, ridden even by town ladies in knickerbockers—whose appearance is sure to draw the whole village out of doors, as it is quickly signalled from house to house as soon as detected. Male cyclists do not awaken the same interest, because they are more numerous, many young men of the working class possessing a machine of some description, whilst no woman, not one, of the same class has dared hitherto to emulate the male sex in this respect.

Much less than a lady cyclist is required to rouse the curiosity of the *Bourgneuviennes*, which is kept keen like an appetite by want of food. I was even told that it would not do for the doctor, or for the notary or *percepteur*, to have their house in the main street, because if any one happened to call several times, it would be spied and talked over the place in no time, and the most preposterous reasons would be imagined and assigned for those visits. I was at times greatly amused myself by the irrepressible impulse which led some persons to inspect our clothes - basket in the open street, on its way from the *repasseuse*.

One of the most interesting events to the village people (*village* I dared not have called either Mercurey or Le Bourgneuf within hearing of their inhabitants, for whom they are *villes*, just as their narrow lanes are *rues*) is the occasional passage of troops. It is awaited in great excitement, and hailed enthusiastically. The setting off of the diligence which was to take us to Germolles one fine morning was delayed by such a passage of artillery, and, despite the early hour, the whole population was out lining the street on each side from end to end, eagerly discussing the looks of the soldiers, the condition of their horses, the models of the guns. They are very patriotic and democratic people, and were highly gratified by the appearance of the regiment. I overheard many a proud whisper that "If *now* France went to war it would turn out different." They are perfectly satisfied with the Republic, and say that "although many things might be improved, they had never enjoyed such long security before, and they would resist any attempt at altering the form of the Government."

I said above that on the momentous day of the passage of artillery we were to go by the diligence to Germolles, a village at a distance of four kilometres from Le Bourgneuf, and of quite a different character. It is fresher and more green, and the hills about it are not without a certain sylvan charm, though the trees never attain to any great height, nor are the woods very extensive; but I had been told that Mont Blanc might be seen from the highest summit when rain was not far off, and I was not to be disappointed after climbing up to it. For beyond the shining and meandering river Saône, beyond the vast, rich, peaceful plain, still beyond, and far above the blue range of the Jura and the fainter Alps, a white peak rising clearly defined against the sky was Mont Blanc itself, looking more like a cloud than the tremendous mass it really is. And the rain was certainly not far off: half an hour later we were enveloped in mist, then in a cold drizzle which rendered our descent somewhat arduous, the short hill-moss having become so slippery.

On my return to the chateau, a small group of children, apparently awestruck, attracted my eyes, as I reached the *Place*. They were surrounding a little

girl in an agony of childish grief. With her apron thrown over her head and her face hidden against a wall, she was sobbing as if her heart would break. I inquired what was the matter, but on my approach the little crowd decamped hurriedly, as if afraid of being made responsible, and I could not get the girl to answer me. But there was no need of an answer: the infantile tragedy was made plain by an empty greasy cup in the girl's trembling hand, and by a yellow pool of sticky oil at her feet, from which I had to guard my skirt as I pulled down her thin apron from over her wet face. Evidently she was terrified at the idea of the punishment awaiting her, and when I asked how much oil she had spilt, she could only gasp out, "*Quatre sous.*" I forced the *quatre sous* into her clenched hand and said, "Now, run and get some more oil, quick!" She raised her bewildered eyes to my face, understood, and shot like an arrow into the next shop, without a word of thanks, but with such an ecstatic expression of gratitude that I shall never forget it. Such a slight occurrence would not be worth mentioning had not the sequel confirmed what I have said of the independent spirit of the Val d'Oriens.

About a fortnight later we were at dinner when Gladie came to say that a little girl asked to see me: it was the girl who had spilt the oil, with another cup in one hand, and a tiny brother holding the other and keeping well in the rear. Her face this time was slily conscious and important as she drew near and said, "Madame, c'est de la crême toute fraîche —de notre vache—que ma mère vous envoie"; and after a moment of hesitation she added, "C'est pour l'huile . . . vous savez bien." Somehow the mother had heard, and was unwilling to remain under a fancied obligation. Luckily I happened to have some *dragées*, which I divided between sister and brother to complete their happiness. The cream was delicious, and worth at least twice what I had given for the oil.

Since the middle of September we had been eating grapes from the *treilles* of the chateau, but they were comparatively dear, being of an early and superior sort: we gave fivepence a pound for them, or twice the usual price. The incessant rains delayed the ripening, and I began to fear that I should have to leave before the vintage, which I longed to see once more in remembrance of my youthful days. And besides, Mons. L. had promised to show me and to explain all the processes of *vinification*, when the time came: how vexatious it would be to lose such an opportunity! Formerly women could not enter a *pressoir*, the grapes in the vats being crushed by naked men, who trampled them under their feet: but now it is done by machinery, except with the poorer people, whose vintages are on a very small scale.

I was now met everywhere by signs of the approaching *ven-*

danges: long, flat baskets piled high upon narrow carts, together with the glittering metal *hottes* of the porters. Barrels at every door and filling every courtyard—large, small, old and new, and the great barn-doors opened wide for the cleansing of the vats. Also the unwonted presence of ragged and tired figures, strange to the place, wandering in from parts where the vine is unknown, come in the hope of getting a small share of its bounties. They were on the *Place* and in the street, miserably awaiting the last warm days of unclouded sunshine needed to ripen the grapes for the vintage; yet the sun still showed a wan face behind a thick veil of mist, and the general look of cheerfulness I had noticed on my arrival had now fled from almost every face.

And it so happened that we had to leave the Val d'Or without seeing the vintage, which, after all, proved abundant, if not of superior quality. We had new tokens of the kindly disposition of the people at our departure. Those we knew came to say good-bye, and expressed a wish that we might come again; the old woman who brought our morning milk, and who came a long way for three halfpence, said "it had been a pleasure to her." Gladie wiped her eyes very hard with the corner of her apron as she handed us our packages in the diligence, and Mme. L. sent us a hamper of fruit and a bouquet of everlasting flowers as a souvenir.

(*To be continued.*)

G. W. STEEVENS.

TRIBUTES affectionate and admiring have been paid in full to the memory of George Steevens. Most affectionate and admiring, but most searching and sanely critical withal, is the Memoir by Mr Henley which accompanies the first volume[1] of the Memorial Edition of his works. Little or nothing can be added to that appreciation; but it is fitting that in 'Maga,' where some of the best in this first volume appeared, there should be an attempt to estimate it. And consisting, as it does, of miscellaneous papers which cover the whole time of their author's working life and show most sides of his wide and various intelligence, a review of it is necessarily in some sort a review of the man.

To begin, however, with an account of the book as it stands. Its object, one may say, was to represent, to the best of the judgment of those who prepared it, George Steevens at all points of his mind, in so far as he expressed it in his written work—an expression which, as Mr Henley reminds us, is always partial. It is an extraordinary record. Philosophy, scholarship, delicate and acute analysis and criticism in æsthetics, a virile but sometimes very tender humanity, a power of strong attack, a faculty of irresponsible humour, the hard fist (so to say) and the gay laugh, and with these an eye which saw everything and saw it in a right perspective—all this the book demonstrates, not tentatively or by inference only, but in robust, unmistakable working order. The combination, for an effect on the world, is more important than the excellence. There are other scholars and philosophers, and other men who can use their eyes about the world. The important matter was that this man could both think and see: it is this that made his loss to literature and to practical life so lamentable. It is possible, even, to go farther than Mr Henley goes in regard to the singularity of the fact. He instances other men of literary powers who have used their eyes for journalism—Dickens, R. L. Stevenson, Ruskin, Mr Meredith, and Mr Kipling. Perhaps the present writer rates scholarship and trained philosophy higher than Mr Henley does, and higher than they deserve. But it seems pertinent to remark that Dickens had little or nothing of either, that Stevenson did not possess them in the degree of Steevens, and that they are hardly Mr Kipling's strong point. On the other hand, Mr Ruskin wrote of art and Mr Meredith writes of human nature: Steevens's theme was the working of empire, was peoples and policies.

[1] Things Seen: Impressions of Men, Cities, and Books. By G. W. Steevens. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1900.

It would be a poor service to him to attempt to make out his actual achievement to be greater than that of this or that great man, and it is far from the intention of these remarks. He died at thirty. But that his union of qualities was more than exceptional, and gave sure promise of very great work indeed, is the mere truth. Scholarship and philosophy were not with him mere accomplishments, to adorn a literary style or to amuse the leisure of a practical man. Their results were an active element in his mind, and at least it may be said of them that in a career which would have turned the heads, and in experiences which would have clouded the judgments, of most men, they helped to keep him serene as a man and sane as an observer. And their implicit presence in all that he wrote enabled one to view without misgiving the fact that of late he was doing a kind of work that is commonly done by coarser hands. He lost little, if anything, by this work, and he gained immeasurably by it—resource and readiness of intelligence, a great experience, a fame which should have been a spring-board to ambition. But since this later work was of the practical sort it was, the value of the book before us is largely that it stamps him (in "From the New Gibbon," "Mr Balfour's Philosophy," "Little Eyolf," and "The New Tennyson") as a philosopher and a critic as indubitably as his 'Monologues' had stamped him as a scholar.

It is roughly in this connection to deal with a matter which Mr Henley settles conclusively in a note, but which may bear a word or two in addition. Somebody, it seems, has written that Steevens "did but pretend to approve the reconquest of the Soudan, the reply to Mr Kruger's declaration of war: that what he wrote about these matters was written to please the public, and in no sort represented his own convictions." Mr Henley, speaking from intimate knowledge, contradicts this flatly; and the present writer, who had many talks with Steevens about politics, can add his testimony to Mr Henley's. With some warmth of feeling: for surely to bring a reckless charge of dishonesty against a man just dead is worse than ungenerous. It is a kind of dishonesty—this hireling pretence of opinions—which is or used to be common among journalists and is not unknown among politicians, but Steevens was entirely free from it.

That he called himself a Radical at Oxford or for the first days after leaving Oxford is likely enough. The political opinions of boys at Oxford are not formed on profound conviction. They come from family and other connections, from an idea that Conservatism is the gentlemanly profession, from a revolt against that idea, and from suchlike causes generally. Steevens wore a soft hat at Oxford, as Mr Henley says, and to do so at that period was a sort of symbol, a sort of badge, of those who were all for intel-

lect, who despised fashions and the "best set," and all that. Loosely to call himself a Radical belonged to the same order of consequences, and was about as important—a natural result of training and environment, a very transitory result too. When he came into the world and made friends of practical men, and looked about for himself, his Radicalism was put away — earlier than the soft hat, in fact. I cannot believe that he was ever a Radical in the "Manchester School" sense, and I am certain that he ceased to be one in any received sense. He was not a mere Conservative: "vested interests" were not to him the holiest of human facts. I think he had faith in Toryism as a constructive policy, and therefore was a bit of a Socialist as well. For it is, or ought to be, a commonplace that Toryism, as distinct from mere Conservatism, and Socialism, as distinct from ignorant sham Communism, have much in common. Here is a quotation in point. In his "In Search of a Famine," p. 255 of his volume, he wrote: "I do not wish to alarm anybody by anarchistic opinions; but I think a landlord who draws rent from the land and makes it no return, in the shape of residence and intelligent supervision of his tenants, is little better than a robber." That sentence is consistent with intelligent Socialism and intelligent Toryism alike. There is nothing in the attitude it discloses to favour Little Englandism and peace at any price. Indeed the assertion that Steevens had either of these strange creeds is ludicrously untrue. Belief in the Imperial destiny of England was both a conviction and an enthusiasm with him, and the more he saw of the working of English soldiers and rulers the stronger the belief grew.

That he could have expressed such a belief without really holding it is a suggestion utterly opposed to the essentials of his character. For honesty was in the very make of him. Even the harmless light hypocrisies of social life were irksome to him, and to the end, when the world had greatly overcome his natural shyness — or the shyness begotten of much study and a narrow environment — and he was in congenial company the best of companions, — to the end a disliked presence would drive him into his shell.

Since his character has been mentioned, it may be added that the salient, obvious points of it were a native reasonableness and kindness and a native dignity which neither took nor allowed a liberty. Below that was a strength of purpose and will which made his character even more remarkable (as Mr Henley says) than his intelligence. That strength enabled him easily to throw off any hampering shackles that may remain from a donnish training, carried him through physical trials, in the Sudan for example, before which his sound but not over strong physique must (that strength apart) have failed, and won him the personal respect, as his kindness and straightforward-

ness won him the liking, of types of Englishmen whose training had been poles apart from his—of officers and Tommies. He himself was still changing, and changing rapidly, from the type of student and literary young man, stimulated and aided (if one may say it) by a most favourable influence in his home. Knowledge of men and how to meet them, love and knowledge of the country and beasts and farming, the tastes of a sportsman, all this he was gaining rapidly, and beyond intellect and achievement bade fair to be as fine a type of an all-round Englishman as you would look to meet. How far and precisely in what direction he would have gone with it all, it is useless now to speculate.

But far and in a worthy direction it must have been, luck or no luck. He had been lucky, no doubt, and arrived at his obvious distinction far earlier than might have been the case. His luck was exceptionally good, but it was not unique, and it did not make him. Other young men, at critical periods of their lives, have fallen in with sane and experienced and inspiring friends; other young men have seen the world and the working of armies as early in their lives as he. He was made by his character and his intellect; and it would have been bad luck indeed which could have repressed for long their natural results. There was but one sure blow which fate could deal him, and that blow was dealt him in Ladysmith. The old platitude about the love of the gods cannot comfort us here. It was a cruel chance, and there is no consolation for it.

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PRIMITIVE SOCIALISTS.

THE Mai Daràt, or the Upland People, is one of the tribes inhabiting the highlands of the Malay Peninsula. At the edge of the plains some of them own a sort of allegiance to the Malays, with whom they do business; but as you penetrate farther and higher, they are found to be more and more wild, until in their secluded strongholds they are totally unapproachable.

Across the railway from the club verandah we see the mountains, the Cleft Mountain rising to a peak 6000 feet above us, Kerban 2000 feet higher, with many others showing a zigzag outline against the sky. In early morning as the day rises over them they are a mere screen of blue, unsubstantial and without perspective. As the sun warms them they appear to solidify, and by afternoon have developed great shaggy sides with rolling convexities and hollows. It is then you may see on some distant slope a speck, a brown blur, which at night becomes a spark of fire. The Mai Daràt are not amenable to the regulations of the Forest Department, and burn clearings for their hill crops where fancy leads them, as often as good fortune or an unwonted providence on their part has given them a handful of seed padi or maize to sow. These primeval gardeners are not those wildest people I spoke of just now: they have entered into the heritage of Adam, and are not altogether inaccessible to their fellow-men. Separated from us by twenty miles and twenty thousand years, their old-world beacons answer back the flare of our gas-lamps. We look across the gulf at each other without comprehension, but the desire for fuller understanding is all on our side.

I am acquainted with an Italian gentleman who has accepted a contract under Government to keep up a bridle-path. One day it may be widened into a road: perhaps a railway may hereafter replace its devious course. Meanwhile it penetrates an uninhabited and unknown country. Here Signor Virgil, as I shall call him, has won intimacy with the wild people by means which will become apparent in the course of my story, which is that of a week I spent among them, an uninspired Dante under his guidance.

As often as business brings him from the jungle into the township, the signor occupies a Chinese house in the native quarter. It was there I went to call on him. The street-door opened on a barn-like room, empty except for half-a-dozen swathes of rattan piled in a corner, in apparent charge of which a small fluffy black bear scrabbled about on the brick floor. Safely past him and up a break-neck flight of stairs, I found myself in what looked like an overflow annexe

of the British Museum. There were knives and bludgeons and weapons of all sorts, from every part of the Malayan Archipelago, arranged round the walls. Tables, chairs, and floor were strewn with lumps of different kinds of gum and gutta-percha; there were butterflies in cases, and beetles and stuffed birds: there were specimens of ebony as well as of many other sorts of timber, both cut and polished, and with leaf and bark. There were in fact samples of every kind of thing that a man who lived by trade in the jungle might hope to make money out of.

In the middle of it all sat the signor in singlet and Chinese trousers playing upon a flute. When you first behold the signor you can think of nothing but his mop of golden curls; the humour of his broad mouth and the kindliness of his dark eyes are revealed later. "Oh, I have a chance!" he declared courteously as I came up; by which he meant, my visit was an unexpected pleasure. He is indeed no linguist: the more surprising his influence over his mountain friends. He extends his friendship to all who take an interest in them, and before I left he had cheerfully promised that I should accompany him on his return to their country.

A few days later we started at early morning, with the sun rising and shining into the dewdrops and gossamers, our baggage in rickishas, ourselves in a horse-gharry. We passed the racecourse, cemetery, and club, and said good-bye to the station for a week.

As we proceeded along our nine-mile drive, the road became more and more lumpy, as unfrequented roads of granite do. Then lines of grass appeared between the ruts: a little farther, and it was altogether overgrown. The cloud-capped mountain had at the beginning of the drive made, with its many ranges, a blue background to the verdant scenery of the plain, but now it was quite eclipsed by the swelling hills at its base as we drove in among them; and when the road ended suddenly and the six-foot unmetalled bridle-path began, we were already at the hem of the untrodden forest. Here we saw the first of the little people, whom at this point Signor Virgil desired me no longer to call Sakai, as is our custom, that being the name for them we have borrowed from the Malays. The word means slave, and hurts their feelings. They call themselves by many names, but Mai Daràt, folk of the Upper Country, as often as not. At the hut of a Malay and his wife, whose solitary dwelling marks the termination of the cart-road, were gathered a dozen or more of them come to sell rice—a proceeding which, to my unenlightened mind, seemed highly satisfactory: it appeared to me to be trade and the beginning of wisdom. But when I expressed this opinion in broken English, Malay, and French of Stratford-atte-Bowe, which in combination formed the vehicle of our interchange of ideas, the signor would have none of it—called the transaction *le vol, tout court.*

Its essence, according to him, was as follows: the Malays make an advance of tobacco, betel-nut, lime, and salt, also enough rice for a banquet, and to leave something over for planting. And so this unsophisticated community becomes their debtor, and the Malays acquire a lien on the crop when it ripens. The extent of their indebtedness is a matter far beyond the mental capacity of the hill people: they see the Malay write it down in a book, and go on their way with light hearts: nor do they give the matter another thought, until the time comes to bring in their harvest and obtain a further advance. It is easy to see which party is likely to make the better bargain. I imagined, however, that should the burden prove intolerable it could be resolved by flight: the hill people had only to change their habitation and be off light as air. But my guide assured me that this was a misconception of their character, which is, according to him, most sincere and guileless. "O Madonna, no! Padi belong the Malay. I pay-a him! O sure!" That is how he anticipated they would reply to so disturbing a proposal. But blessed and wonderful is the balance of things. This particular Malay and his wife were reported to be blind gamblers, so you may be sure that the padi reaped in unrighteousness brought them no good, but between *Fantan* and *Shap-chu-yat* quickly disappeared within the gently smiling jaws of an alien from the Flowery Kingdom.

While we waited at the ninth mile for the coolies to rearrange and handle our baggage, frequent parties of the Mai Daràt kept coming in with jungle produce to barter, and departing. Some brought dozens of the fruit of the *petài* tree, like enormous bean-pods, which is very welcome among the Malays as an appetiser to their rice. Others brought the red onion-shaped roots of the *kolubi* to the Malay emporium. They marched in with a fine free tread, leaning somewhat forward, stepping rather high, with their eyes on the ground three yards ahead of them, in single file. They would walk so along the widest and flattest causeway in the world: it is the habit which the treading their shoulder-narrow tracks in the forests, all bestrewn with stumbling-blocks, has bred in their bones. The men were almost naked; the women's clothing consisted of a petticoat reaching from hip to knee, and a wide cloth hung with a knot at the right shoulder across the breast and back, so arranged that in the fold behind she could carry her baby or other wares. Even among these "tamer" Sakai—I translate here and throughout the arrogant expression of the Malays, by which they mean a greater degree of subserviency to their influence—even among these the upper garment seems worn for use, or perhaps fashion, rather than as demanded by modesty; for I observed that some dispensed with it altogether without making themselves conspicuous,

and those who used it did not hesitate to take it off, or, which came to the same thing so far as appearances went, to twist it round, when they wished to get at its contents.

Nearly all these people could speak fluent Malay, which led me at first to look for a degree of knowledge in them that they by no means possessed. Just as we were starting, there stepped out from the steep underwood below us a party of three, a gaunt old man with the flank and loins of a wolf and the face of a John the Baptist, and two girls who he said were his sisters. This was a manifest impossibility, as one looked about fourteen and the other not more than ten. All three carried small plaited sacks full of padi. I asked the old man what his price was. "Twenty dollars a gallon," he answered promptly, looking straight at me and speaking in a melancholy deep voice. I thought he meant twenty gallons a dollar and asked him so, but he only looked puzzled and hopeless, and made as if to pass on. My guide then told me that he did not mean anything in particular, neither knowing how many dollars the number twenty might represent, nor having any exact idea of the capacity of a gallon. (Later on I asked of a man his price for a boar's tusk which he had hung about his neck. He replied, "Five dollars," in a tone which seemed to say, And not a penny less. I tendered twenty cents, which he accepted with great delight.) My guide took a photograph of the elder girl. You could see her heart ticking between her ribs as the monster with black hood and three sharp legs ambled into position before her. But she stood her ground.

You know what coolies are. Not before noon did we get off. The people who made the bridle-path gouged it out of the skin of mould covering the steep sides of the granite mountains. As we passed from one watershed to another sometimes the fall of the land was at our left, sometimes at our right hand: but for most of the way, there on the one side was the steep descent to the river, humming below us in rapids and cascades; there on the other side, above the bracken-clad cutting, towered the centenarian forest. Now, without attentive nursing such a path could not long exist. Trees fall across it: after a day's rain, when every rivulet plays torrent, it is torn grievously—sometimes a dozen yards ooze away between sunset and sunrise. So Signor Virgil is given a contract, and keeps twenty-five miles of this road in repair. It will be easily understood how in a country like this the labour-supply is his chief difficulty. His solution thereof was manifest before we were gone many miles.

Where the road goes large to circumvent a granite boulder, we came around the corner suddenly upon a mighty tree which had fallen across the path. Six feet at least in diameter, it lay among the splintered timber and bamboo, in a death-bed of its own strew-

ing, a grey, smooth, unbroken bole, fifty yards in length, with the river snarling among the branches at its head, deep below us, and a rood of earth hanging above on its upturned roots. Here was an obstacle; but already a family of the Mai Daràt, men, women, and children, were assailing it with their biting thin-lipped hatchets. And what I noticed also was that an orchid, as big as a rhododendron-bush, had been torn from the head of the fallen giant in defiance of the *Krengga* ants, and lay with its great yellow blossoms freaked with jet ready as an offering to the mender of the by-way. "Bor" (good), says he; "mai bor" (good men): and they seemed very well content. There it was I made my first essay in the use of their language: "Pe singòt" (Don't be afraid), a very useful word to know if you wish to deal with this timid folk. To every gang we met, the signor gave a word of praise and a joke with a lump of tobacco, telling them to come in to us at our destination; and while we legged it along he told me a great deal about his people, and especially he enlarged upon his theory, which was not after all a very new one, though he seemed to think it so. It was the commonplace of a hundred years ago, the primordial virtues of the savage and the degeneracy of our latter-day civilisation. You have it in Rasselas, that blameless Abyssinian; you have it in the "Cainballes" of Michael, Lord of Montaigne.

"It is a nation . . . that hath no kinde of trafficke, no knowledge of letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no use of service, of riches, or of povertie; no contracts, no successions, no partitions, no occupation but idle; no respect of kindred, but common, no apparrell but naturall, no manuring of lands, no use of wine, corne, or mettle. The very words that import lying, falshood, treason, dissimulations, covetousnes, envie, detraction, and pardon, were never heard of amongst them."

Even the Chinese Classic for children begins in its delightful attractive way—

"Man at the origin was of a Wholesome Disposition: yet although at first he Held Closely to this Original, in after days he Fell away therefrom."

My Virgil knows nothing about modern anthropology and sticks to the old idea. "They are-a primi-tìve," he says, swinging his arms with an air of enthusiasm. According to him they do not steal, they do not lie, they do not break any of the commandments, and when they get anything to work for, they *do* work.

When the afternoon was getting late we reached our destination at the nineteenth mile, and pitched our camp in the unfurnished shanty which Government has built for the accommodation of chance travellers on the bank of the brawling Jura brook, a sight of the clear waters of which, as we crossed it on two long bamboos set in cross-pieces, was enough to convince me that no tin-mining of any sort was taking place within its drainage area above this point. Indeed we are here in a region aloof from all commerce, where the sole traders

are the sparse upland families who keep clean Virgil's path for him. The shanty, which is no more than a zinc roof, a floor of split bamboo, and two cubicles planked off at one end, lies in a little amphitheatre of a hundred yards across, with the tree-tops rising so steep all round it that the sun (I found) did not rise over them till past eight, and seldom broke through the white mist for another hour. Pushing our way through the bushes of the overgrown compound, we were soon installed, while the Chinese servants, who appeared to enjoy the novelty, went straight to the cook-house behind, and entered upon their duties. By this time it was too late to do more than despatch a messenger to the nearest family, about four miles farther up the valley. So we slept warm and comfortable in blankets, and free from mosquitoes, it being there about 2000 feet above sea-level.

People who sleep nearly naked in a bleak mountain unsheltered from the saturated winds of heaven, reject the appointed road to health, wealth, and wisdom, and cower melancholy as monkeys over their fire till the morning sun has dispersed the clouds. Consequently, not until past ten did our guests appear, trooping in a long procession over the bamboo bridge below our verandah. Do not, accustomed to Malays, expect your hillman to loaf casually up to your door and then to sit down, looking as if he had come through sheer absence of mind, and had not very likely planned his visit for a week beforehand. Such are not the ways of the unsophisticated. These people marched straight up to the ladder, "So like-a take a forteresse," as my guide put it; and sat down in a ring on the floor. First there were Pa Jumat and his wife Pa Stoe, a venerable couple according to the generations of the jungle, who must have been getting on for sixty. He, probably inured by lifelong habit, declined all clothing, and, from his tousled head of faded hair to his battered feet, had no covering for the skin that lay in wrinkles upon him but a pair of pink bathing-drawers. His wife wore her hair plain — that is to say, matted by nature, and grizzled and indescribably dirty; and now, since I like these people, and desire only good to report of them, I will say once and for all that they were all indescribably dirty as to their hair. It is true that the younger women must coquettishly have combed theirs, otherwise nature reigned supreme. And another thing — they do not wash at all, ever. Some of the dirt rubs or flakes off them, and some does not. For my part, I think they are quite right. A poor, cold game is washing in cold water without soap and drying yourself on leaves, as every one will agree who has played it. The old lady, whose expression was severe but not unpleasing, wore a khaki jacket, fastened at the neck with a simple mother-of-pearl button, also a cotton Malay sarong.

Then there was their son Urup—a strapping young fel-

low of five feet one or two. (It is curious how quickly a man adjusts his standards to those of the people he is judging.) Urup prided himself on his travels, spoke Malay fluently, which none of his companions could: he was, moreover, very proud of this accomplishment, and of his easy, confident manner with Europeans. It was not long before we were on intimate terms, and he told me a great deal; and when he had nothing new to tell, he repeated himself unblushingly. To him I am indebted for most of my knowledge that was not derived from the signor. He wore a pair of striped pyjamas cut short at the knee.

Urup had two wives, Pa Rousày and Pa Ntoné, who sat shoulder to shoulder together in my circle of new acquaintance. At the time it occurred to me this might be from sheer nervousness, not from goodwill, but later I found them to be very good friends. They wore no coats, and were clad only in their native gala dress—a strip of red bark, some four feet long by a foot and a half broad, twisted round their hips in a knot at the left side, so that it was open down the left thigh to give free scope to the limbs when walking. At either hip there was hung a big tuft of dried grasses or herbs fixed into a bamboo socket, partaking of the nature both of an ornament and of a charm against sickness. They wore necklaces of children's beads and twenty or thirty turns of brass picture-wire tightly wound round their upper arms, with bangles of the same at their wrists. Their hair was frizzed out to an enormous extent (it is naturally crinkly) and stuck with bamboo combs.

Pa Rousày struck me as one of those unfortunate people who, thanks to a grotesque exterior, are never taken quite seriously by their friends. I thought she seemed the butt of the party. She certainly was an extraordinary figure—if figure she can be called, inasmuch as she had none. One eye was considerably smaller than the other, which gave her the appearance of being on the perpetual wink. Her face and breast were temporarily tattooed with blue and red lines and white dots stippled upon them, and she had the cheerfullest, merriest expression, and she certainly danced and sang the best of them all. But, alas! for the inconstancy of Man, even the Primitive. Pa Rousày was childless: she was no longer young.

Hence Pa Ntoné. She was a beauty among her people—black fuzzy hair, light brown skin, large dark eyes, and a mouth which was large but beautifully shaped. Sprays of a flower rather like white lilac were in her hair, and the holes in her ears were kept open by little round bits of wood. Tethered to her wrist by six inches of fibre was the peace-offering that she brought, a green woodpecker, which lay croaking dismally on the floor

beside her. She wore the upper garment I have already described, bringing it round upon her lap as she sat down, out of the fold of which, as a young kangaroo from its mother's pouch, there peered the round face of Pati, a little boy of one or two, staring through his elfin locks at the strangers. His mother rolled him a cigarette — a tiny roll of tobacco wrapped in a bit of dry *nipah*-palm leaf — and sometimes he puffed at it and anon he took the breast. Once before I had seen a tame Sakai woman suckling a kitten, but this struck me as more peculiar still.

It was after our acquaintance had ripened a little that I ventured to joke with Urup, the much be-married, about his multiplied responsibilities, and my comments being translated caused general amusement, the poor Indian being satisfied with a far less excellent joke than must be set before the reader of 'Maga.' Urup grinned and said "Bor: good. It *is* a good plan," somewhat defiantly. The ladies under discussion appeared engrossed with their rice, and said nothing. The relations of the two wives seemed, as I have said, quite amicable. It was later, just after taking the photographs, that Virgil delighted Pa Rousày by presenting her with a cotton jacket of a cheerful magenta hue which he produced with a magnificent air. She put it on at once, and her feelings being too many to sit down under, she must needs get up and march round and round the room. Of course the other young women clamoured for a coat apiece too, but there were no more that time; so they satisfied themselves with marching in an admiring tail after the leading lady; and if envy, hatred, and malice, or any uncharitableness was in their hearts, then they are not the simple folk I take them to be. Pa Ntoné's disappointment, it is true, was mitigated by two brass curtain rings which I found in my pocket. And as they were too big for her fingers, at my suggestion she put them on her toes, and stamped about rejoicing. Besides these there were Pa Roup, a matronly looking woman with a very deep voice, and her husband, against whom I only find the words Private James in my notes. No characteristic trait had he, of any distinctive kind. Lastly there were the two sons of the patriarchal couple, I forget their real native names, which I may say were rather hard to extract, they preferring to be known by Malay names. I have them down in my notes as Si Ranting (Master Twig), a boy of about fourteen, newly married to an equally immature wife, and Si Tan, his brother, of eight or ten. They were each of them dressed in a loincloth which could not have scantier been. The elder of the two boys was suffering from a disease very common among the Upland People, a sort of flaky sloughing off of the skin upon the whole body and limbs. That made up the first day's party.

At first the presence of a stranger put some constraint upon them, which was happily dispelled as soon as a great brick of tobacco with *sirih* leaves and betel-nut had been set down in the middle of them; whereupon they looked at each other and burst out laughing. Then Pa Rousày and her sister-in-law—or how shall I express the relationship?—went out to see to the washing and cooking of the rice, and I got into conversation with the rest as well as I could and began my vocabulary, about which I shall have something to say presently.

We also filled up the time by having our photographs taken, and an interesting collection they make. Perhaps the most "heureusë resoolt," again to quote my guide, is the view looking up river from the bamboo bridge: the jungle forms an arch of dark foliage bespangled where the broad leaves catch the sunlight, and the river runs among black granite boulders, dappled with foam in pools and shining stickles. In the foreground are the two boys shivering and huddled together, one polishing the other with a block of soap. What an advertisement it would make! Si Ranting came out with his skin as smooth as Naaman's, but, alas and alack! as fast as he grew dry, so quickly did the miracle fade away.

When the cooks came in noisily bearing the great chatty or bowl of steaming rice, who shall describe the enthusiasm? It was good to see people with such obvious appetites, so conspicuously thankful for their victuals. Only one thing was lacking, some upland equivalent for the resounding grace:—

"A boar's head in hand bear I,
Decked with wreathes and rosemary;
And I pray you gentlemen all be merry,
Quot estis in convivio.
Caput apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino."

This lack the omnivorous infant clearly felt as he raised his voice and mightily proclaimed, "Cha Ba, Eat rice, Cha Ba!" There had been prepared twelve big leaves for plates, upon which Pa Stoe helped out the rice in equal portions, two being carefully folded up and put aside for absent friends at home. Meanwhile looked on with benignant eyes the Founder of the Feast.

After the meal accounts were taken, but that in no too avaricious a spirit. My guide opened his boxes on the floor, and the sight of so much wealth was in itself a pleasure. First was given several double handfuls of red tobacco, with as many of *nipah* cigarette wrappers. Then (but this was a solemn and noble giving) a red blanket to the ancient Pa Jumat. Urup had a chopper, some one else a sarong: beads and brass wire found eager acceptance, as did matches, some salt, and a ball of string. Also a dollar apiece all round, a gift which was acceptable, as a compliment to their civilisation, but of little material use to them. And of course the rice, one small sack of it for a beginning, it not being consid-

ered good policy for the giver to leave himself beggared in that respect upon the first day. So off they went in high spirits.

Next day they came again, most of them with one or two others, and the same scenes occurred. On the third day, Virgil being out, I with some trepidation acted as their host. It was a most successful entertainment, consisting of a concert followed by Dumb Crambo, but the guests did the entertaining. The day before they had been begged but could not be persuaded to sing; nothing but a very little half-hearted humming "De, de, ng, de, a, de," &c., could be elicited, but a great deal of hanging back, pushing forward, giggling and slapping. Now, whether they had grown accustomed to me or whether they had partly forgotten my existence (I was sitting in an unobtrusive corner desperately attempting to sketch them), anyhow Urup, his eyes falling upon a Sakai mandolin, a plain joint of bamboo with two fibres strung along it, picks it up, and after mechanically twanging the strings a little, breaks suddenly into song in a clear ringing deep voice, and the others joined in the chorus. His tune ran as it were upon a certain note, and the subject of each verse appeared distinct, of birds or beasts or of their known familiar haunts, and while the chorus repeats in slow recitative the words and the note, the leader trills ahead in runs and shakes up and down the scale,—not that there is any scale in our sense of the word. (You must pray accept this most untechnical description as better than none: listen to a child humming to himself on a summer morning, and you will hear the tune and better understand the vocal score.) This is one song as it was translated to me:—

"*Leader.* Going, going on hill and mountain,
Chorus. Hill and mountain, hill and mountain,"—

and so on, the chorus taking up the last words of the leader's improvisation.

"Climbing, climbing, climbing, climbing,
Over streams and over rivers,
Rivers deep and little rivers,
Rivers shallow, flooded rivers,
The river Gol and the river Bidor,
The river Jelal, the river Klung."

It is fine music, manly not boisterous, plaintive but never repining, the song of a full memory, a reminiscence. It is direct as the gait of an elephant and stately, harmonious to wild and silent places.

From singing the girls fell to dancing. And now I must mention a trivial incident, as it shows how little we understand each other. They were hardly begun when the old lady Pa Stoe jumped up with a scandalised expression, and stopped the performance. Of course I could not understand her indignant comments nor the girls' deprecatory replies, but I guessed it was the old story. "Of course they mustn't let themselves go before a white man," I thought, and I cursed her in my heart as she bundled them all out of the house. But

I was mistaken. All she had said was, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," or words to that effect. And when they came back with bunches of leaves in their hair and at their waists, she smiled in benign approval on the performance, and the dance began in due form. They stood swaying from the knees, and waving their arms. Every now and then they made a sudden whoop and a jump and change of places, just as in the Highland schottische. The old lady beat time with her hands, and chanted "*Ta, ta, ta, tok.*"

Presently the mandolin accompaniment forgot to play, the dance grew wilder and wilder, and finally resolved itself into mere pantomime. Pa Rousày, in her magenta coat, with her streaked visage, Pa Ntoné, with the flowers in her hair, the immature bride, with Pa Roup for partner, stood *vis-à-vis*, crossing and recrossing (it was the first figure of the Kitchen Lancers now) with marvellous gesticulations, bounds, and outcries, till the bamboo floor skipped beneath us. It did not take long to discover that they were acting the parts of the forest denizens. First it was tigers: they fiercely roared, and sharpened their nails cat-fashion against the wall. Most of us have seen a tiger do this, and perhaps have stirred him with a patronising umbrella in Regent's Park. Seen in his own forest by attentive eyes of fear, how bigger he must have loomed upon one of these miserable unarmed pigmies, who intruded all unwitting upon his manicure, and lived to make a play of it! Then with heads stretched out and waving fins they were fish in the brook, pressing up against the current. It was Tigi the snake, and they rolled over and over upon the floor. Sambhur was suggested, and before there was time to be shocked all four were on their backs with the legs sticking straight up in the air, up again and cantering round the room on all fours, or rubbing the velvet from their antlers, which, as I guessed, had been foreshadowed by the first part of this remarkable pantomime. And so with many other animals. I suggested monkeys, just giving them a clue, and they seized the idea and greatly improved upon it, scratching themselves and destroying imaginary and hopping vermin in the most realistic manner. Then they sat down in a row in the doorway with their legs dangling over the ladder, and whooped and chattered and generally outsimianed the tribes of monkey-kind.

Pa Rousày having, as I have said, been provided with a magenta jacket and the other three *danseuses* having none, I felt it would be ungrateful to let them go bare backs away after so laughable an entertainment. I therefore presented each of them with one of my merino singlets, which reached well down to their knees. And I cannot say whether they were more delighted with the style of the garments or with them considered as a protection against cold. So off they went. I watched them file across the

bamboo bridge and disappear round a turn of the bridle-path: the ragged head and gaunt figure of the patriarch, his old wife carrying Pati her grandchild, then the magenta jacket and the three new singlets laden with rice bags, then the two boys, the bridegroom and his younger brother. Last of all, blow-pipe in his fingers, comes Urup, the man of experience. One after one they were reabsorbed by the jungle from whence they came.

And that I thought was my last sight of them; but it being a fine afternoon, and another of their household having called on some errand or other, we decided to go up home with him. We told him to follow his own jungle paths. We soon left the bridle-road and pushed through their track, no wider than a deer's track, steep as the side of a house, then down again, to find ourselves breathless and covered with dirt and leeches on the bridle-path again. The jungle folk are clean hunters. There seemed no squirrels left on their demesne,—hardly a bird. In one place we were shown a *blantak*, a gin for deer or wild pig, which consisted of a sharp wooden spear, a spring of bent sapling held back by a rattan rope laid treacherously across the ground. Of smaller game we found a rat strangled in a noose set on similar principles, and brought it along with us.

We came out near the top of their clearing, where the Indian corn was throwing up green heads among the burnt and blackened branches of the recumbent trees. Scrambling down its almost precipitous face, we passed through a spinney of giant bamboo as thick as a man's thigh, out upon a ridge which projected half-way across a wide and long valley, upon which ridge lived our friends. They lived in two one-roomed huts of about fifteen feet by twelve, with floors of split bamboo laid a few inches above the wet earth. The walls were of *bertam* thatch, and not more than two feet high, for the thatched roof was steep and not high enough even for them to stand upright under, except in the middle of the room. In the house we entered were all our friends, besides two thin wretched dogs—sharp eared, sharp nosed, sharp backed, each with its hind-legs tied together to keep it from straying. They were all sitting round the two fireplaces; the smouldering ends of logs radiating from these centres of warmth gave forth a tingling smoke which filled the hovel and filtered out through a hundred holes. The floor, the walls, the thatch were alive with a hundred thousand cockroaches. The wind swept chill down the valley.

What a life! Think what it must be to live like that, huddled together for warmth, in nakedness, without food fit for a dog. Can you realise the position of a family whose house must be built from roof-ridge to flooring out of the growths of the jungle; who yet own not a knife to cut them, because they live twenty miles away from a shop, or because they have not half a dollar?

Must they go into the cruel *bertam* and break off its spiky fronds with their hands? To have no means of winning fire but one flint and steel perhaps in a family that hunts for its food over half-a-dozen valleys! Urup has it; but Urup has gone to see our neighbours over the hill. The rain through the hole in the roof has put out our fire, and now it is night, and between us and hunger are a squirrel and a dozen big fat grubs—raw, and we have no fire. For my part I find it hard to realise the tragedy of the situation. I can't help thinking, Could they not rub two sticks together? Could they not . . . ? Surely, living overshadowed by a million acres of fuel, they could contrive something! It seems absurd to think of such helplessness and misery for want of a trumpery box of Japanese matches, with a monkey stamped in red upon it, selling at two for a cent.

On such a scene appears my friend in his *rôle* of Universal Provider. If you count up all their possessions, from red blanket to rock-salt, you will see that he has supplied them all, not as a dole but in return for work. He has given them clothes, he has made them plant corn. When it is ripe they and their friends from far around will make a mighty orgy, and eat and eat until the barn is empty, but no matter. Once a-month at least there is ensured to them a sufficiency of farinaceous food, whereunto is added tobacco to tickle their nostrils and betel-nut to comfort their hearts. I say it is a good work.

Theirs is a poor life at the best. Still, as we never know when we are well off, so happily it is possible to be miserable unawares: I do not suppose they are sorry for themselves. They certainly did not look disconsolate as, gorged with rice, and cooking more, they sat wrapped up in their new clothes. Pa Ntoné had enveloped Pati in hers, so that his straggling top-knot alone was visible. Rats on such a day were at a discount, but I wanted to see cooked the rat we caught—and in a minute there was nothing I wished to see less. And yet it was quite simple. They tied a string to its tail, and dipped it into the fire, twisting the string. They did not clean it first, and the process may have carbonised the outside, but I am certain it could not have more than warmed the flesh. I am aware that travellers (it is expected of them) partake of all strange meats; but as I would never taste in China of their gaunt, garbage-fed pariah dogs, so now I refused raw rat.

The encampment was on a ridge, as I have said. This ridge, like a half-completed barrage, partly blocked the course of a long valley, which lay between the mountains for several miles north and south. Northwards it runs up to the flank of the cloud-capped mountain, where, in the blueness, a brown patch like the one we stood upon was just distinguishable. Between us and it there was only the tree-tops in endless monotony — green-grey,

brown-grey, blue-grey. One forest head stood up at a mile distance, the colour of pink hawthorn.

A rainstorm coming up the valley as we watched blotted out the distance, and despatched a chillier breath to forewarn us. They in the hut were intent upon their rice, but they shivered, as it were, mechanically. I could have wished it were possible, . . . a good thick sweater apiece now. . . . I looked at the signor, and the same thought was passing through his mind, I verily believe; but he only shivered melodramatically, and all he said was, "Breeze 'e go!"

So we departed, having shaken hands all round, for my guide is not concerned with the wellbeing of their bodies alone: he also holds himself responsible for his people's manners. Of the series of misfortunes which befell us next day as we went home, and which culminated, as late and hungry we reached the ninth mile, in the non-appearance of our gharries, leaving us so much farther to walk in the downpour of rain —of these I will make no long story:

> "Me list nat of the chaf nor of the stree
> Maken so long a tale, as of the corn."

If any one familiar with the Upland People was asked to give a description of them, he would, I believe, make first mention of their inoffensiveness. Pugnacity seems to be an idea foreign to them. They possess a deadly weapon, the blowpipe; but I never heard of its being turned against a fellow-man. It may be that the severity of their life has been sufficient to keep down their numbers: the jungle being wide enough for all, competition has never enforced the lesson that the fighter alone is fit to survive. The same gentleness governs their household relationships. As they have not to fight for their sustenance, so they need not for their wives, of which there are enough to go round; and their unaggressive nature would revolt from the idea of stealing or ravishing another man's wife from him. I happen to have heard of one case which, under more auspicious circumstances, might have provided sufficient scandal for a six-shilling novel. The signor told it me. In a household that he knew there lived two men, and a girl who was married to one of them. The girl and her husband used to sit side by side, and the other man and his mother sat on the opposite side of the fire. After some weeks of absence the signor revisited that house and found the husband sitting alone, while the man who used to look at the girl sat with her by the fire. "How is this?" he asked the girl; "you sit with a stranger and your husband sits alone." "Oh," said the husband, "that is as it should be: she is no longer my wife, but is married to my friend." "But how can that be?" "Why," said the good, easy man, "her heart think one, my heart thinks other, how can we live together? We must fall ill! Oh, very sorry." So the difficulty arranged itself without calling

any high passions into play. Divorce being without rancour and so easy, jealousy is a superfluous emotion among these people, and the women in consequence enjoy a social freedom that is almost emancipation. I forgot to say that the formation of the girls' dance above described was interrupted by the arrival of a stranger Sakai, who stalked in between them. Half in fun, half anger, they fell upon him and buffeted him heartily with their bunches of leaves. I instantly looked at their husbands for some sign of disapproval; but not a bit.

But the signor's approval of them goes further than anything I have yet said. His father fought under Garibaldi, and the son, earnestly hopeful of a new dispensation, found here in the mountain the archetype of all he dreams that Italy shall become, "no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no use of service, of riches, or of povertie," no soldiery, no police, no Pope. It is the true Socialism, and they the Primitive Socialists.

With all respect to Mr Rudyard Kipling, a free life in the forest does not appear to me calculated to produce the physique of a Mowgli. Of these people I only saw one much over five feet high, the women being proportionately smaller. While capable, as might be expected, of long fasts and forced marches, they are far from muscular, with skinny arms and legs no bigger than an English boy's of fourteen. Generally speaking, the men's development appears arrested, —narrow shoulders, feminine hairless features. In colour they are of a brown rather lighter than the Malays, with glossy black hair (when clean), which hangs in curls over their ears and upon their necks, giving an appearance of disproportionate size to their heads, and so making them look still more like children. On the whole, they are far from ill-looking, though their foreheads are low, with heavy superciliary ridges; their noses are flat, insignificant, and negroid. Their mouths are wide, but often beautifully shaped, and they differ noticeably from Malays and Chinese by keeping them habitually shut. But that which most strikes an Englishman on coming into contact with these little creatures, and which draws him at once towards them, is the remarkable openness and candour of their expression. They look at a stranger neither defiantly nor in any way cringing, but carefully and steadily, as if ready for unforeseen action on his part; but when they are reassured, with an expression that is dignified in its simplicity.

Their language, as far as my infantile vocabulary goes, seems monosyllabic and dissyllabic: it is spoken in a jerky explosive manner, and contains many nasal sounds. Some words sounded very like Chinese, and I strongly suspect that it is connected through Siamese with that language. There do not seem to be any inflexions. I experienced the usual difficulties in composing my vocab-

ulary. Thus: I asked the Sakai for "I" and got the reply "eng" at once, but when I tried to get "we" they were quite at a loss; and when to explain myself I said in Malay, "For instance, we have all come from the river," they answered No or Yes as the case might be, and we became involved in a spillikin-heap of cross-purposes. They have only the first three numerals, *nenok*, *nar*, *nir*, in their own tongue; the rest they borrow from the Malay.

Beyond a love of beads and bright colours, their æsthetic faculties seem undeveloped: only on the butts of their bamboo combs and on their blowpipes they scratch patterns obviously intended to represent the shoots of bamboo. I tried the experiment of drawing a wild boar and showing it them. It was not worthy of a Rosa Bonheur I know, but still recognisable I thought, on account of the tusks: it was received with the blankest misapprehension. I tried again with an elephant, and this time successfully. "Gajah," they cried, pointing triumphantly to his tail and trunk.

Ignorant, unprogressive, inoffensive, it is very understandable how such a people were dispossessed by the fierce Malays as they came up the rivers into the country, and were driven before them up the mountains. Here they remained, subject to frequent and murderous raids, until, after the lapse of centuries, the English in their turn came up the rivers.

It is now some months since I visited the Upland People, but they are not easy to forget. Their blowpipes I could not ask them to part with—it is not fair to leave them without means of hunting their small deer. Instead I brought back for a keepsake a necklace: it was Pa Ntoné's, a dozen glass beads on a bit of jungle string. The pendant is a coin the size of a sixpence, apparently of tin. On the one side is a lion rampant. On the reverse is HOL·LAN·DIA, 1791. I wish I knew the history of this battered token.

EDWARD A. IRVING.

PERAK, 25*th April* 1900.

'MID THE HAUNTS OF THE MOOSE.

DEUX RIVIÈRES is a stopping-place—it can hardly be called a station—on the Canadian Pacific Railway before you come to Port Arthur and Winnipeg, and the few wooden shanties of which it consists stand on the border-line between Quebec and Ontario. It stands, moreover, on the edge of that vast wilderness that stretches unbroken to James Bay, the southern loop of Hudson's Bay itself. Just below this little "lumber village" runs the Ottawa river, icy cold, swift, and narrow. It has not here attained the width and power that many miles farther on render it of paramount importance to the lumber trade; and, last year in October, when our little party went up into this wilderness to hunt moose, we found that the Ottawa river here formed the dividing-line between danger and safety. In Ontario *l'orignal* (moose) was still protected by Government, and had been for three years; but in Quebec, across the river, any one who could get within range of a moose after October 1 was allowed to shoot it. The moose seemed to know where they were well off, for Ontario was reported "thunderin' full of 'em," whereas Quebec was comparatively deserted.

"It's easy huntin'," an indiscreet fellow in Deux Rivières observed to us as we made ready to start; "you can shoot yer moose on one side of the river and bring ower his horns and pelt on the other. The game-warden ain't agoin' to hunt for that carcass, you bet. And even if he do, he ain't agoin' to find it before the wolves and meat-hawks and ants have had their go at it." The licence for each gun is £5; and the fine for shooting out of season is exceedingly heavy. It is divided between the warden and the man who reports the discovery.

No camera can ever reproduce the still beauty of that morning scene when we left the train at 5 A.M. and made ready to leave the little outpost of civilisation. The cool autumn air, fragrant with a hundred scents from the surrounding woods, was still hazy with the smoke of forest-fires that had been smouldering all the summer. Through this gauze-like veil the maples and birches, already turned to gold and crimson beneath the touch of early frosts, shone with a strange luminous beauty that for miles in every direction lit up the ocean of trees with flaming patches of glory. And all was still and silent. There was no wind astir, and the air only trembled very faintly to the musical roar of the waterfalls and tumbling rapids of the Ottawa below. A few human figures moved here and there among the little wooden shanties.

The river swept swiftly

round a sharp bend, and rushed on to a dangerous fall two hundred yards farther down. Along either bank there was a vigorous back-water. To cross this water with our packs, tents, &c., we embarked in a clumsy lumber barge propelled by immense oars. The first back-water carried us a considerable distance up-stream, the men heading the boat straight across all the time, and rowing as hard as they could. Then we suddenly entered the main current, and were swiftly borne down the centre of the stream, the boat turning round like a huge top all the way. The banks seemed to fly past. The roar of the fall, and the horrible edge where the river dropped abruptly out of sight, seemed to us unpleasantly close, when the prow of the boat caught the other back-water and our direction was instantly reversed. With a shudder and a splash the unwieldy boat spun round and shot up-stream again, finally landing us in safety at a spot exactly opposite our original point of embarkation. During this brief but exciting journey the French-Canadian oarsmen regaled us with pleasant stories of boats swept over the falls and lives lost in the spring when the river was high and the strength of the two back-waters was easily miscalculated by a few seconds.

Then, for two days and two nights we travelled by canoe and "portages" inland to the lake of Cogawanna, whose lonely beaches were said to be haunted by "the biggest moose yer ever seen." The scenery these two days was in a sense monotonous. Miles upon miles of undulating forest and low hills—no open spaces, except black patches of desolation, where fires had consumed the underbrush and licked the branches off the giant trees till they had died. The second growth on the scene of a fire is never the same as the trees that were destroyed, but usually silver birch or scrub-oak and maple. Everywhere we passed these lighter greens among the sombre shades of the hemlocks, cedars, and pines. Lakes of all sizes and shapes came suddenly into view, blue as the Mediterranean, or green and black as the ocean itself. The constant repetition produced the sense of monotony; but the real charm of it all lay in the utter loneliness and remoteness from the scenes of men's labours. Wild-duck of all descriptions we saw; cranes, huge fish-hawks, divers, laughing loons, eagles, tracks of otter, mink, bear, deer, and occasionally of wolves along the shores—and moose-tracks, where the great beasts had blundered through the dense scrub to find a drinking-place. But no men, not even Indians; no farms, no shanties. We had the great woods to ourselves. Chipmunks, chattering on the crests of lofty pines, dropped cones upon us as we glided silently by, close to shore. Loons dived in front of us, and popped up again, many hundreds of yards away, with fish in their beaks. More than once, as we turned a sharp

corner, a startled buck looked up and stared in amazement at us before it turned and crashed away into the forest, "whistling" as it went. There were no mosquitoes. The cold nights had mercifully destroyed them. No singing-birds, nor any of brighter plumage than the rich blue of the blue jay and the light greys of the meat-hawks or carrion-birds. No wild-flowers, or hardly any. The merciless winter does not encourage their growth. Better still, no flies, no snakes, no poisonous insects of any kind. There is a decided note of grimness in these northern woods of Canada, — almost as if the shadow of the cruel winter hung somewhere in the air, even in summer, and held up a warning finger: "This is sacred to the life of the forest. You may venture here in the warm months, but never let yourselves be caught here when the frost comes, and the snow on the wings of the north wind."

Meanwhile, we had reached the old haunts of the lumber companies. On all sides we saw their traces. In days gone by there had been lumber-camps at remote points. In the deep snows the men cut the trees and "skid" them over the slippery surface to the edge of the nearest water. The logs are piled up 20 feet high on the shores, and when the ice melts they are tumbled down into the water, and in huge "booms," acres in extent, are floated for weeks down streams and across lakes till they reach the Ottawa river and eventually the great saw-mills. In the spring these booms choke up many a good fishing-stream. Perhaps the first big fellow gets caught by a projection on the bank. Instantly the others pile up on his back, till in a few hours a towering heap of logs dams the river and forms a "jam." To break a jam is to lead a forlorn hope, and it is not uncommon in these solitudes to come across a plain wooden cross, close to some tumbling stream, with the inscription roughly hewn with a knife, "Jean Garnier," or "Jim Smith, killed by jam"— with the date. And these lonely graves beneath the "murmuring pines and the hemlocks" have their poetry and their lesson of duty nobly done without hope of reward.

The apology for this digression is that the lumber companies proved of great value to us. In order to skid the logs they have to cut roads, so that the horses may have a tolerably clear path. These roads are on the surface of the snow, lying perhaps four feet deep, and in the springs are only recognisable as faint vistas in the forest. They always lead to water. Following these woodland vistas, canoeing down winding lakes shut in by lofty cliffs and dotted with picturesque islands, we covered the fifty miles that lay between us and our destination. About sunset on the second day our "birch-barks" grated in a sandy bay of Cogawanna's northern shore, and we pitched a permanent camp on a promontory covered with silver birches and maples.

Water-fowl of various de-

scriptions scattered with whirring wings as we landed, and more than one porcupine ambled leisurely away into the woods when we began to chop the tent-poles and get the stones for the fireplace. When the sun finally disappeared, the shadows of the night fell over a camp as cosy as any hunter could desire, and perhaps a little more comfortable, because one of the party happened to be a young lady. The stillness was almost unearthly when the moon rose over the lake, silvering untold distances, and throwing impenetrable shadows under the trees. I sat over the little fire at the mouth of my tent long after the others were asleep. It seemed unnatural that the whole country should be so silent when the woods were full of life — moving life too. Everything alive in the forest moves at night and rests by day. The woods travel in the darkness. At that very moment, as I sat in the cold moonlight looking out upon immense stretches of forest, there was not a hundred yards anywhere in which some living creature was not moving. Yet there was no sound—not the breaking of a twig or the crackling of a dry leaf beneath the lightest paw. Nothing but silence, and moonlight, and the stars, and distance. As I imagined the moose prowling and feeding not very far from us, they almost seemed to me a survival of the antediluvian monsters, a species all by themselves, having no part or portion with the degenerate animals of modern days.

With the earliest morning came the sound of fish jumping in the lake and the chipmunks scampering through the trees overhead. But the excitement began at breakfast (trout and buckwheat cakes), when one of the men announced the discovery of fresh deer-tracks not half a mile behind our tents. Deer are not plentiful in these regions. The wolves keep their ranks thin. No wolf can catch a deer in the woods; but in the winter, ferocious with long fasts, they chase them on to the ice, and soon get their teeth into their tender flanks. They double more easily than deer on the slippery surface, and, being lighter, do not sink so deep in the soft patches of snow. The barking of a few wolves in pursuit of a deer sounds like the fighting and snarling of a lot of angry dogs. It must be an unpleasant sound to have at your heels at any time, and the poor deer makes the most frantic efforts, but only slips from side to side, growing momentarily weaker, till it is at length overhauled and torn to pieces. The discovery of deer so close to us was only exciting because it meant we should not lack fresh meat; but moose was the magic word in our camp, and the first thing to do was to find out where the moose were in relation to ourselves. These creatures, it may be said, move generally in groups of four or five, or less. Several groups of this size travel in the same direction, and cover practically the same country at the same time. In this sense they may

be described as moving in widely scattered herds. They get over vast distances, moving with great rapidity, and the enormous territory at their disposal of course makes difficult hunting. You must have iron muscles and be tireless. A fresh moose-track—that is, one with no water or cobwebs in it—may be followed fifty miles, the creature always keeping half-a-dozen miles ahead of the hunter. If, meanwhile, it chooses to take to the water, the tracks of course are lost, and so much time has been wasted, that's all! The utmost caution has to be observed. Their ears are sharper than those of a deer. If a twig snaps beneath your mocassin, or your coat brushes noisily against a low branch of some maple-tree, they will put another mile to their credit before you have gone a hundred yards.

It is upon their unrivalled powers of scent, however, that they chiefly depend for their safety. Nature, or evolution, has endowed them with a proboscis of rare proportion, and their title of "Hebrew of the Woods" is thoroughly deserved. In the wide nostrils gaping at the end of that expansive muzzle, the least scent, the faintest odour, is faithfully registered, and the owners are off at top speed in less than a second. With their heads lowered, and in spite of the bull's spreading horns, they charge through the woods at full tilt, crashing through the densest underbrush as if it were standing hay, and smashing young tree-stems as if they were the stalks of sunflowers. Everywhere, in these northern woods, can be seen the traces of their passage—trunks with the bark scraped off, broken saplings, tufts of hair caught on pointed branches, and on the ground the imprint of their hoofs and tremendous stride.

Accustomed to the dim twilight of the great woods, the eyeballs of these creatures are oblique, as with deer, and do not seem to be specially sensitive. They never turn their heads at shadows. Provided the wind is right, you can approach a moose to within a few feet, if you go straight in front of him, and he will never see you. If he does raise his head, it will mean that his *ears* have warned him of your approach. If you can fool his ears and his nose, you can put salt on his tail, say the hunters. But wind and rain are the best aids. Noisy weather is good hunting weather. The roar of the branches, the rattle of the rain, and the constant dripping from the trees upon the leaves on the ground, combine to drown the inevitable sounds of your approach. Then there is good chance of success. The front legs of the moose are longer than the hind ones. To drink (if the bank be steep) he has to kneel; to crop the sweet shoots of the wild rice they must assume the humble attitude of prayer. Their food consists chiefly of the ground hemlock, whose low bushes cover the ground in the neighbourhood of big hemlock-trees, and can be easily got at in

winter by scraping away the surface snow; but they are also fond of the topmost leaves of the young maples, which their great height enables them to pull down with ease. On all sides, where moose have been travelling in the autumn, the maple saplings can be seen bent double to the ground. When the earth is too hard to hold a track, the experienced hunter can follow the path of a moose for miles, by observing where he has cropped the hemlock and the sweet maple leaves on both sides as he sauntered slowly along, enjoying his vegetarian meal.

In the great heats of July and August these animals suffer terribly from the sun, owing to the thickness of a hairy skin that also keeps them warm when the thermometer is 40° below zero. In these months they commonly wade into the lakes and stand up to their necks in the cool water, where the Indians, to their shame, slaughter them without mercy. They offer a large target, as may be imagined, and, though strong swimmers, cannot get away from the bullet in time. These same Indians affirm that the bear is the shyest animal of the woods. Bruin certainly is a very wary beast; but the moose, in my humble opinion, comes in an uncommonly close second. On all sides you can see the rotten logs the bears have torn open in their search for ants and honey, and the deep trail leading up to, and away from, them; but the bear itself is probably miles away, covering the ground in that rolling, tumbling gait of his that carries him along at incredible speed. It is no uncommon sight to surprise a bear among the low fruit-bushes, no matter what way the wind is. When berries are thick you may stumble frequently enough upon them in the midst of the blue-berries, with both front paws round a particularly rich clump, and gluttonously devouring the ripe purple fruit. Yet who ever came upon a moose in the middle of his dinner, unless wind and weather and everything else were against him?

The first two days we spent reconnoitring. It was necessary to find out in what special portion of their great park the moose were enjoying the splendid "fall" weather. In three parties of two each, with compasses and canoes, we separated, after a very early breakfast, and spent the day following the freshest trails we could come across. At night we met again round the blazing logs of the open camp-fire, and compared notes. All of us had come across very recent trails of deer, bear, beaver, otter, fox, skunk, even wolves—but the moose-tracks were all old. There was nothing worth following, nothing fresher than a week. They had moved.

"They're travellin' fast, and we've got to shunt along purty fast to get up with 'em."

"Unless they're movin' in a circle, which they often do—darn 'em!"

Then followed the usual consultation of maps, which we laid over a flat stone beside the fire,

and studied intently while the owls hooted in the woods behind us, and more than one pair of glowing eyes watched our proceedings from a safe distance.

Ten miles to the north of us Garden Lake stretched its lonely bays and arms over an immense surface, dotted with wooded islands, on one of which the Indians had built their annual crop of birch-bark canoes. I found the thin strips of cedar, and the root they use for strings, still lying among the long grass. Garden river, the exit of this lake, was trampled and pounded for hundreds of yards along the banks, but the owners of the monstrous hoofs had gone. Blue Lake, to the west of us, with its cold blue waters; Sand Lake, with its yellow stretches of shore; Green Lake, with its deep green waves and precipitous cliffs, Roscoe Lake, Round Pond, Lindsay Lake, and a dozen more besides, all bore traces of the giants' thirst along their quiet shores. Maple leaves had been cropped and ground hemlock devoured; tree stems scraped; projecting twigs left with a tuft of coarse hair streaming in the wind, and the ground manured in patches. But the moose themselves, shy mammoths, were hiding somewhere out of our way, and the second day's search brought us to the trails of their sentries, that were by no means too old for hope. The hoarse croaking of the ravens, always a sign of their neighbourhood, was heard at intervals; and the carrion-birds, that follow them in the air, feeding temporarily on a parasite of their thick hair, and hoping eventually for a whole carcass, were seen flitting about in all directions. This reconnoitring is pleasant work. The air is dry and cool, wonderfully invigorating, and laden with the hundred scents of a primeval forest that stretches unbroken to the icy shores of James Bay. You tread all the time on a carpet of deep moss or crimson and golden leaves. On all sides the partridges are "drumming," or flying quietly into the lower branches of the trees, where half-a-dozen will stand and let you shoot them one by one. Squirrels dart everywhere, chattering and squeaking, with tails erect, and a rare nest of nuts hidden somewhere for the coming winter. The quiet bays of the lakes shelter wild-fowl of all descriptions, and the springs fill your flasks with the best brand of champagne you have ever tasted.

So we peeled the crackling bark from the silver birch-trees and fashioned calling-horns, and prepared in other ways for night-watches and vigorous hunting measures generally. The cry of the cow moose is admirably imitated by means of this rude horn. While an amateur exaggerates it into something between a fog-horn and a cornet, the practised hunter produces the long deep "moo" that carries an incredible distance, and rarely fails to bring the bull, if within hearing length, crashing headlong down to his death.

The third day my guide and I loaded our pack with a few

provisions, and with tent and canoe started for a series of little ponds beyond the northern shores of Garden Lake. We journeyed all day down "lumber roads" that were simply vistas of glowing colour. I was always in front, with a 50-lb. pack strapped across the shoulders and a loaded rifle, while behind me the man, with the canoe over his head like a gigantic pantomime hat, followed awkwardly. Frequent rests were necessary; but who could wish to go fast in such woods on a fine day in October, with the blue sky overhead, and the slanting sunlight putting the match to autumn bonfires on every side. We moved as quietly as possible in mocassins.

"Hunt *all* the time; you never kin guess when your chance'll come."

Once the man stopped suddenly and sniffed the air like a dog. He made a sign to me, and I helped the canoe off his shoulders. He went a few feet ahead of me and pointed to the ground. I looked and saw a heap of gorgeous leaves left by an eddy of wind. It was indeed a patch of beauty; but I thought it strange for this rough woodsman to take so much trouble to show it to me.

"Beautiful, indeed," I whispered.

"Ain't it, though?" he whispered back. "It's a young cow. Guess she ain't been away long either!"

It was not the poetry of autumn that had moved him, but the smell of a moose, and the deep imprint of her body where she had recently rested upon the leaves. I saw it plainly enough when his finger outlined it for me. He kept sniffing the air as he gazed.

"There's a moose within . . ." He hesitated. I gasped. "A couple of miles, maybe," he concluded.

He showed me the faint hoof-marks on the thick carpet of leaves where it entered the wood.

"That thar cow was lyin' thar not ten minutes ago. But the wind's wrong, and I guess she smelt us pretty strong."

Speaking for himself, I have no doubt she did!

We followed the trail some distance into the woods. The underbrush was very thick, and we had to scramble on all-fours. The cow had doubled a good deal on her tracks. We presently came to a spot where she had evidently waited a moment.

"She stopped to listen here," he explained, sitting down on a huge fallen tree and gazing sadly at the hoof-marks. "When one of them animals is startled it runs 200 yards, maybe, into the woods, and then stops to listen. This is whar that cow stopped to listen, or I'm a—Injin."

"She didn't stop long," I ventured.

He looked at me without speaking, and then motioned me to follow. For half a mile through the woods we followed the tracks. Soon they began to get longer and wider apart.

"She was scared here. She's runnin'."

The tracks got wider and

wider apart, till finally they reached a big tree lying on the ground, with its branches sticking out like the spokes of a wheel in the air. There they seemed to come to a full stop. But the woodsman soon found their continuation — on the other side of the tree.

"That's whar she jumped—see!" he explained. And, measuring it as accurately as we could, it came to 18 feet. A very fair jump, I thought, for a cow moose. To clear the branches she must have crossed the tree at an elevation of nearly 4 feet.

It was just sunset when we reached the shores of Garden Lake and saw the expanse of still water, with dark patches in all directions showing the islands. There was no wind, and not a cloud in the sky; so we launched our canoe in silence, and for the next two hours paddled across the deserted waters, skirting points and islands, and occasionally long reefs of black rocks. Like Hiawatha, we

> "Sailed into the fiery sunset,
> Sailed into the purple vapours,
> Sailed into the dusk of evening,"—

and before we were half-way across this arm of Garden Lake the moon rose over the ridge of forest and silvered a picture of fairy-like enchantment such as I have never seen equalled. It was peace beyond all telling, and the only sound was the water splashing musically against the sides of the frail canoe and the monotonous dripping of the paddles. It didn't matter where we landed to camp. All was ours—islands, points, bays, and mainland. No one could interfere. The loneliness was real.

By the light of the moon, then high in the heavens, we pitched our tent upon the farther shore on the edge of the mighty woods, and after devouring the two partridges shot *en route*, and drinking a quart each of black tea, we crawled into the narrow tent and were soon fast asleep —I in a sleeping-bag with a red woollen nightcap on my head, and my companion in his clothes with his ordinary slouch-hat drawn down over his eyes.

The day following was clear and still. In the afternoon we portaged into a narrow little pond, unhonoured by a name, that lay several miles in the forest, and at a much higher level than the main lake.

"It ain't fur from the ridge, and if they're travellin' in this country they're bound to come within callin' distance." He never deigned to use the word moose. It was always "they" or "them beasts," "cow," "bull," or "calf."

It was late in the afternoon, and very little wind was stirring. Stealthily we lowered the canoe from our shoulders and pushed it into the lake, and then with the utmost care got in ourselves and paddled cautiously down the near shore. The canoe moved on the quiet water like a spirit, silently, almost without ripple, as if it knew what was expected of it. I sat in the bows, the rifle across my knees, and the man propelled us with a slight movement of his wrist, never taking

the paddle out of the water. In such still weather the dripping of the drops carries dangerous distances, and the sun shining on its wet blade flashes signals that can be seen literally for miles. Neither of us spoke a word, and, in spite of occasional spasms of "canoe cramp" that shot up my legs and back, I sat motionless. The least movement, and a birch-bark canoe crackles like a pop-gun. The opposite shore, about a quarter of a mile across, lay in front of the sun, and therefore in shadow. The sun was fast nearing the edge of the ridge above. Nothing seemed more likely than that a moose should come down to drink, and nothing less likely than that it should distinguish us from one of the many logs that line the shore beside us. It could never make us out across 400 yards of water. The lake was perhaps two miles long. About half-way down the man stopped paddling, and, with very slow even movements, raised the horn to his lips and blew a long sad "moo," that echoed numberless times before it finally died away in the sea of silent woods round us. Twice he did this, with due intervals, and there was no answer; but just as the third "moo" was losing itself in the distance, a new sound rose after the echoes. We paused and listened intently. It was the breaking of branches a long way off. . . . The guide's keen brown eyes flashed a message to me as I turned my head towards him.

"There he comes, . . . but a long way off."

A tremor ran through me, and I strained my ears so much to listen that I heard the blood singing under the skin. The sound of breaking branches continued to reach us at intervals, each time a little closer than before. Some great animal was moving through the long stretch of forest on the opposite shores. He seemed to be at a spot half-way between the lake and the ridge. It was getting dusk, and drinking-time was close at hand. Every now and then came a louder report, as some young tree was snapped off short, and then followed a period of silence again. The shadows were settling down over the trees. Already the sun was below the ridge, and probably within a short hour of the horizon itself.

"He's feedin'," whispered the man; "he ain't travellin' fast."

"Is he coming this way?"

"Guess so, if we don't scare him any. The wind's right."

A puff of air came against our faces at that very moment as if to verify his words. It came from across the water. For another half-hour we waited in cramps and silence. The beast never deigned to answer our cry, nor to hasten his step, yet he was certainly coming nearer and nearer. It was just about drinking-time; but the poor brute did not bargain for a piece of lead in his cup.

"It may be a b'ar," whispered the man.

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when a roar that made the air shake issued from the shadows directly opposite.

"There he is," whispered the man excitedly, pointing.

It was some seconds before I could distinguish anything at all save the dense growth of bushes that lined the shore. My rifle was raised and ready, but I could see nothing to aim at. Then suddenly the bushes parted and I saw a form, dim and immense, rise up out of the very ground it seemed. The width of the horns was lost in the shadows; but there was no mistaking those broad shoulders and that big brown bulk. Instantly the canoe shot round, and began to move swiftly towards him across the lake. I pointed ready to fire, and the light bark trembled beneath us like a thing of life as we moved steadily forwards. There was a touch of buck-fever; but the steel-tipped bullet sped true, and the monster fell with a crash to its knees.

"Steady—now another one," said the man behind me, urging on the canoe as fast as he could.

A second shot, and the moose rolled sideways into the lake and lay motionless. Next day the other men went over to skin it, and the horns and pelt were just about all they could manage. The horns measured 52 inches across, and there were 28 points.

The night we watched for moose I shall never forget. Sleeping for several hours in the afternoon, we took an early supper, and just as the shadows were falling started out for our adventure. The lake had to be crossed and a mile "portaged"; then a second lake came, and after it a second portage. It was nine o'clock when we cautiously slipped the canoe into the still waters of a secluded pond far from camp. A frosty night without wind seemed in our favour. A host of stars in a sky as clear as winter was the only light we dared use. Wrapping ourselves up in blankets, we crawled in the canoe to a suitable spot twenty yards from shore, and there prepared to wait till the dawn. No tobacco was permissible. No fire could, of course, be made, nor anything cooked. A nip of whisky about two A.M. was all that warmed.

How still the night was. Our breathing seemed the only sound. The pond was barely three-quarters of a mile long, and very narrow. It seemed, so far as we could judge, to be in the direct route the moose had been taking of late. Surely some one of them would deign to drink of its sweet waters at sunrise. Everything alive in the woods travels at night. Everything is awake and moving. Yet, how silently. The shores of the lake rose up into the sky by gentle slopes, and from the shadows of the remoter shore came occasionally the splash of an otter or the wet patter of a mink running along over the stones. Once or twice we distinctly heard a deer drinking; but the noises of our heavier game were not yet audible. Men hunt moose often for days and days in this country without getting even a "smell of one." A New York man, who for

years has sought his favourite game in these regions, told me that one season he spent seven weeks here—"hard huntin', you bet, it was, too!"—without seeing a single animal. As I sat cold and shivering in the cramped canoe, I passed some of the time working out mathematically the chances that a moose would, or would not, come our way. Millions of square acres, thousands of lakes to drink at, miles of forest—and, then how many moose? My companion interrupted my calculations by pointing to the other shore. Had he heard something, and could so huge a beast move so stealthily? No! it was not a moose. The moon was rising, that was all; and we should soon have to change our position and shift into the shadow. A single motion of the paddle accomplished this, and we glided under the lee of the other shore, with no sound but the rustle of the man's coat-sleeve and the drip-drip of the paddle, as he drew it shining and wet in the moonlight from the water.

As the moon rose over the hill, the shadows deepened along the shores, though retreating a little, and the air seemed to grow colder. A flood of silver light shone on the flat surface of that sea of trees opposite; but behind us we could see nothing at all. It was too dark to distinguish even one tree-trunk from another. Now and then a wave of cooler, richer air seemed to breathe out upon us from the deep recesses at our backs, bringing scents of moss and bark and pine-needles and all that is sweet and good in the heart of the woods. Distant sounds, too, faint and muffled, reached our ears, and kept the blood tingling. I was too excited to feel sleepy. Every minute I thought the hum of indistinct murmurs would grow louder and differentiate itself into the tread of hoofs, the breaking of boughs, the crashing of saplings. Every instant I thought those immense shadows, that foregathered and waxed and waned on the farther shore, would suddenly step forth into the moonlight and assume the shape of a great animal with spreading horns. But the hours passed, and the moon crossed over to the other side, and the stars began to fade. Already the eastern sky was beginning to . . . Hark! What was that? A sound like the cracking of distant branches trembled on the air and died away. Presently it was repeated, again, and again. Something was coming at last. It is needless to say what our emotions were, after the long cold night, when we distinctly heard the animals—for there were several—breaking through the underbrush at the far end of the lake and coming out to drink.

A confused mass, a big moving shadow, was all we saw. It was too far away, and the light was too uncertain. Crack, crack, went the rifles, and when the echoes had subsided, we heard the whole hillside crashing to a mighty tread as the moose thundered away at full speed. . . . And

that was our last chance. Soon the sun was up, and after visiting the drinking-place and inspecting the deep hoof-marks, we dragged wearily home the twelve miles to hot coffee and fried trout.

It was a pleasant camp we had there beneath the slender silver birches on the point of a sandy little promontory. On one side was the sandy bay sacred to the men, and in a little cove on the other side the solitary lady-hunter of the party was supposed to disport herself matutinally in the cold waters. As a matter of fact, it was generally believed that she preferred a basin of hot water in the tent; and towards the end of our stay, when it grew really cold, her husband was brought round without difficulty to her view of the situation. The point of the promontory was kept for the guides, though it must be recorded to their honour that they made no ablutionary use of it, and that the deep pools seemed to them better fitted for cleaning the fish and partridges in. From our tent-doors we looked straight down seven miles of blue Cogawanna water. Soon the surface would be a solid sheet of ice, over two feet thick, and covered with snow; but then it was dancing and alive, full of fish, and warm enough even in October to make an occasional swim enjoyable. Cogawanna was a Chippewa Indian who died about 1860, and was buried on a little pine-clad island at the far end of the lake, and in the centre of his favourite fishing-grounds. A grave marks the spot. At its head stands a rude wooden slab in which some one (I never could ascertain who) annually cuts a little deeper the wooden cross. The island just appears in the centre of my tent, and fills its narrow opening as I lie in bed. Cogawanna's grave, too, has its mystery and pathos.

Our guides were thorough woodsmen, hunters by instinct as well as experience, and skilled in all branches of woodcraft. They could build a canoe, carve a yoke for the shoulders to carry it on, or fashion a "dug-out" boat from a log with equal facility. They never get lost as long as they are provided with a compass; and a small axe hanging from the belt, which also holds a hunting-knife, is their chief tool and weapon. They profess contempt for the French-Canadian guides as well as for the Indians. The former are lazy and too often dishonest. Moreover, they have indifferent lasting powers. The Indians, on the other hand, as guides, are untrustworthy in another sense. They are paid by the day, and the longer the trip lasts the more money they make. The consequence is, they keep their hunting-party a safe distance from the game as long as possible. It is always the next day or the day after that they promise to discover it. In this way the inexperienced hunter who relies upon their tender mercies often goes home with a poor bag—just

enough to keep up the Indian's reputation (and therefore income) as a game-finder—when he might have had twice the sport. The Indians then report as quickly as possible to the nearest station of the Hudson's Bay Company where the game are lying, and receive orders to go out again and bring back the hides and furs, for which they of course are paid commissions. As guides they generally are paid, with the French Canucks, six shillings a-day. Our men, who came from the Adirondack Mountains (New York State), received twice as much; and they enjoyed the hunting as much as we did!

They are rarely willing, however, to go on an expedition into the woods without plenty of whisky. Our chief guide, as soon as we got into camp, made a "cache" of the bottles somewhere in the dense brush behind the tents, and thus controlled the quantity consumed. The other fellows never knew where it was. When more was wanted he would only get it at night. Taking a lantern, he would pretend to search among the trees for ten minutes or more, and though the others watched him carefully from a distance, they never could tell when or where he picked it up. Yet he always returned with a bottle.

There was a spawning-bed just opposite our camp, and the speckled and salmon trout fairly swarmed over it. The water was shallow and covered a nice sandy bottom. At night, when the moon was on the water, it was a sight worth observing to see the hundreds of scaly backs sliding and slithering over one another just beneath the surface. A sudden spurt in the canoe often brought the fish knocking and tumbling against its thin sides. The paddles struck them at every stroke.

There were wolves in the neighbourhood, and the lady of the party, an unerring shot and enthusiastic hunter, held these creatures in special abhorrence. She hated to hear them bark. Several nights running some animal had been heard sniffing and snuffing round their tent. The ground was too bare and hard to leave any tracks, and the opinion was divided between a wolf, a bear, and a porcupine. "It seems to be a largish animal," she said.

Just as I was dozing off one night, after a hard day's hunting, I heard voices in the tent next to me.

"There's that thing again," in the lady's voice. "You *must* get up and see what it is."

"Oh! it's nothing but a silly porcupine," growled the husband. It was a cold night, and those camp-beds are warm and cosy, besides being hard to remake.

"But it's trying to get in."

"That's no reason why I should get out, though."

However, the lady thought it was, so after a few more growls he got out of bed, and peeped through the opening of the tent. The moon shone brightly, but only served to make the shadows beneath the trees the darker.

"Take the gun."

"I've got it. Give me the lantern. I hope the beast won't go for my legs, whatever it is."

"Put on your top-boots, then."

A sound of laughter came from the guides' tent beyond. Evidently they were listening as attentively as I was. There were manifold sounds of preparation, and in due course the brave husband, in pyjamas, top-boots, red woollen nightcap, and pea-jacket, issued forth into the cold night. The lantern swung over his arm, and the loaded rifle was pointed. His footsteps were soon lost in the silence, and I lay and listened in my sleeping-bag, praying devoutly that he would not aim hastily and send a bullet whizzing through my canvas or my skin. Suddenly there was a shout, "I see it!" and the next instant the rifle cracked. "It's a skunk!" he cried with a roar of laughter. And that's all it was. But the guides thought a good deal of that skunk. The wind was blowing in their direction, and the whole benefit of the penetrating and offensive odour of that otherwise harmless little animal was wafted into their tent. They got up and burned the body—but you cannot burn the stink of a skunk. The language of the guides at intervals during the night was fully as picturesque as the other surroundings of our camp.

CHILDREN OF THE HOUSE OF KAJAR.

II.

UNDER every conceivable circumstance it behoves the Sháh of Persia, whose least grandiloquent title is that of the King of Kings, to affect a demeanour in public which shall rival that of the Sphinx in impassiveness. This assumption of aloofness from the emotions of the flesh and the spirit reached the zenith of achievement in the bearing of the late Sháh, Násiru'd-Dín. While he accepted the adulation of his subjects with the mien of a marble god, he granted to them the fullest freedom of speech. "Let them talk!" he said on one occasion, in the very words of the Prussian king. "They say what they like, and I do what I like." And if it sometimes happened that Násiru'd-Dín Sháh missed the hour when great Jove awoke, you may be sure that his face gave no token of the blunder he had made. He had learned the traditional bearing in his youth, and age was powerless to stale its ineffable composure.

The son, however, who now reigns in his stead, was less fortunate in his destiny: he had to acquire the sovereign style when his face was worn with the agony of his long self-effacement in Azarbaiján, and, if he now bears himself with the unimpassioned aloofness of a Sháh, it has been at the cost of an all but superhuman effort of the will. His thoroughbred face, pure Jewish in its lineaments, as are the faces of so many Persians, is careworn but calm, unconscious of its pathos, and hence it makes a touching appeal to such among us as have eyes to see and hearts to understand.

A very different aspect is that of his elder brother, the Zillu's-Sultán, whose sons are the subject of this sketch. A rough-hewn, bony, expressive face is his, covered all over with adipose tissue, like that of Martin Luther. The mirror of his mood, it can knit itself in a frown and put on a vindictive look; just as readily it can kindle with compassion and win over an enemy with a smile. Lean, the face had been aggressively vigorous; but being, as it is, undeniably fleshy, its vigour is rounded with an expression of good-humour more or less habitual. Perhaps the face wears its most attractive appearance when it is turned upon his children, whom he calls "the light of his eyes." Then it is that his whole countenance breaks out and expands in a smile of benign affection, infinitely lovable in so masterful a man. So devoted was he to his favourite daughter, the sister of Akbar Mirza, that he could not bear her to be out of his sight: accordingly she was requested to dress herself in male attire, that she might accompany him

whithersoever he went; and this she did until she was ten years old, when the haram claimed her as its own. A photograph—a charming souvenir of those tomboy days of hers—was given to me on the eve of my leaving Persia, and lies on my writing-desk at the present moment. The Zillu's-Sultán, in military uniform, is sitting in a broad chair, which he fills with his amazing bulk. His right arm is thrown around his little daughter, who is nestling at his side in the uniform of a Persian general. Her hair is cut short; on her head she wears a tall hat of white Astrakhan, and an expression half-thoughtful, half-wilful on her chubby face. A half-brother of hers, in a similar uniform, stands between his father's knees, looking for all the world like a little *mullá* in disguise.

The Zillu's-Sultán has many daughters; but this winsome maiden is the queen of his heart, the tyrant whose will it were humiliating to oppose, so irresistible is said to be the smile that she holds in reserve for the foolhardy! In like manner my pupils have many sisters, but this darling playmate of theirs is the only one that counts. I know not which of them loved her the most. Akbar Mirza, it is true, born, as he was, of the same mother, spoke of her as "my sister," but he took precious care not to put a stress upon his proprietary claim if Homayun Mirza happened to be within earshot. "Elle est *notre* sœur!" the wild little Kurd boy exclaimed one day. "Et j'aime elle aussi que tu ne sais pas—oui!" And as "notre sœur" it is that I always think of her. She is now sixteen years old, and is still the light of her father's haram and the apple of his eye. According to Homayun Mirza, no Persian living is worthy to call her wife. He expressed the conviction with his customary vehemence. "Mosie mon ami," he cried, "les hommes en Perse, ils sont trop——! et notre sœur, elle est très——!" I did not ask him to cudgel his brain for the missing words: his gestures were more than enough to lay bare his unutterable contempt on the one hand and his breathless adoration on the other. Discretion forbids me to pursue the story of "notre sœur" in the cloistered life of her father's haram. It will suffice to say that, although I never saw the light of her countenance, she was, all unconsciously perhaps, my most useful ally in the upbringing of her brothers, who feared nothing so much as a word of reproof from her. Her influence over them was boundless, and made for manners and manliness: and herein alone we have ample warrant that the Prince her father's known affection for her is well-deserved. And with this I will draw the veil over this pearl of price, and ring up the curtain upon one of the most eventful days in my life at the Zillu's-Sultán's Court, asking my readers to remember that the young princes have grown a year older since their first appearance in the pages of 'Maga.'

When I entered the schoolroom, my imperial pupils, less

imperious and undisciplined than of yore, leaped from their seats at the round marble tables, and stood at attention.

"Good morning, sir," they said in chorus.

"Good morning, boys," I replied. "Sit down."

Sinking to their chairs, they waited until I spoke again.

"This morning," I continued, laying down my whip and sun-helmet, "we shall do no work, because——"

The prospect of a holiday took them by surprise, and, before I had time to say another word, Homayun Mirza, whose stormy moods, as you will remember, were ever wont to suffer a sea-change of remorse, leaped to his feet, gave a cheer, clapped his hands, tossed aside his books, and cut a caper round the room; then, doffing his *kolah*, he laid hold of my whip and gave it a clack, swearing by his father's life that I should be his Prime Minister when he, Homayun Mirza, should be King of Kurdistan; after which, his excitement relaxing under the tutorial eye, he resumed his seat and begged pardon.

"It is incredible," he said in French, his vivid face all beams, "how rude I am."

"Hand over the whip, you young Turk!" I cried.

"Très bien, mais vous ne me rosserez pas, monsieur (but you won't thrash me)?"

"Certainly not."

"Très bien! *Ai-ai-ai*, how that whip hurt me yesterday! I can feel it still—mosie mon ami, I can feel it still! *ai-ai-ai-ai!*"

"Then I should recommend the perpendicular," I replied, "as being less excruciating—stand up! What I was about to propose when Homayun Mirza interrupted me was that you should escort me to the Tálár Tavílah. That is all. What do you say?—shall we go?"

Bahram Mirza, a ruler in little, said nothing: he rather fixed his unfathomable eyes upon my own, and smiled a grave, slow smile.

Homayun Mirza's gratitude was expressed in such droll French as to vanquish the tutor in the man. "J'aime vous," he declared for the hundredth time that week, "que vous ne sais pâs. Oui!" Then correcting himself—"Si vous saviez comme je vous aime!" This whole-hearted expression of goodwill was infectious: a sunny smile lighted up Bahram's eyes, deep and inscrutable; Akbar Mirza, tilting back his *kolah* as a declaration of independence, burst into a hearty laugh; while Feridun Mirza, erstwhile pale and pensive, seized the occasion as his own by right of his sole gift as a story-teller. Flinging himself back into the past with a spirit and a dash that took many a fact at a bound, he depicted the pristine splendour of the historic spot, Bahram Mirza only opening his lips in order to confirm or to deny the truth of the graphic description.

The story, as told by Feridun Mirza, Prince Fortunate, was a revelation to his tutor of a character till then unappreciated. I ear-marked the un-

expected trait in my memory as a means whereby a dull hour or so might be whiled away in the future. The effect upon Homayun Mirza was very different. His brother's eloquence chafed his restless spirit as the wind chafes the sea. He protested in every limb of him his eagerness to be out of doors. Yet the description was full of life and colour. Stripped of Feridun's flowers of speech, the Tálár Tavílah, or Stable Hall, of the Isfahan Palace was a fairy-like structure in the spacious reign of Sháh Abbás the Great. It was an abode where some Persian jinn and her court might seek shelter on starry nights, and scarce regret the shadowy seclusion of their airy fairyland. Venetian crystals of every colour of the rainbow formed the sashes dividing it into three compartments. The groined ceiling, richly wrought in mosaic, was supported on wooden pillars as graceful as flower-stems, all adorned in purple and in yellow. Tapestries of unimaginable beauty covered the walls. Water rose in a spray from many fountains, and fell with a splash into a tank of snowy marble that filled the central compartment of this Crystal Palace. There it was that Soliman Sháh, the successor of Abbás the Less, was crowned the Asylum of the Universe; and thither, through the shady compound of chenar-trees, the representatives of the foreign Powers were wont to wend their way to the ambassadorial audiences. On those gala occasions the garden was tricked out in a fashion calculated to dazzle the visitors with the wealth and splendour of the Persian Court. Fountains innumerable cast their liquid diamonds to the flashing sky. Water rippled through channels made of porphyry. Flowers of the brightest colours yielded their sweets to the fierce hornets and humming-bees. The best blood of the imperial stud was led out in harness, all ablaze with precious stones, and hobbled hard by the mangers surrounding the gardens with chains of massive gold. The paths were crowded with courtiers, grave and reverend; they were there to do homage to the Feringhis whom the King of kings delighted to honour.

"Such, monsieur," said Feridun Mirza, pausing to take breath, "was the aspect of the Tálár Tavílah in the days when the pomp and magnificence of the Court of Sháh Abbás Buzurg were the envy and the admiration of every country in the East.

"And the West too," said Akbar the Magnificent.

"And now?" I asked.

Bahram Mirza smiled his grave, slow smile. "Nous avons changé tout cela, nous autres," he replied; then his dark unfathomable eyes took on an abstracted look. Akbar Mirza darted a quick glance upon him.

"We princes are rich enough, anyhow," he retorted.

Once more the grave, slow smile flickered over Bahram's face, pallid and impenetrable, then went out like a light.

"Are we rich enough to

defend ourselves against the Russians?" he asked.

"England will help us — won't she, sahib?" was Akbar's reply.

"Did England help us against the Afghans, who laid Isfahan in ruins? Would it not be wiser to learn to help ourselves?"

"Allons voir le Tálár Tavílah!" cried Homayun, dancing with impatience. "Vite. Si non, mon force il vâ! Oui, sahib, mon force il vâ! Je veux dire que je serai à bout de mes forces."

"Bahram's questions," I replied, gripping the lithe youngster by both his arms, "should teach you to husband your strength. Off you go."

There was a rush for the door. Homayun was the first to get his shoes on. "Vous ne sais pas me prendre, sahib!" he cried, and was gone, his servants panting in the rear. A wild colt for speed, he ran hither and thither, neighing, crowing, shouting, laughing. The tutor, following at his ease, went off in a day-dream. His aim was to teach the Persians to be themselves, by inculcating in the children of the House of Kajar the principles of a go-ahead patriotism. Though his reach might exceed his grasp, he would still pin his faith in the success of the undertaking, because the material was good, awaiting the hand that should shape it aright. Bahram Mirza promised to be the ablest Kajar that ever lived. He was a ruler in little, a politician in the germ. Homayun Mirza, it is true, needed discipline; but his dash and go and unconquerable spirit were the stuff whereof soldiers are made. The tutor found it more difficult to place Feridun Mirza. Pensive, courteous, gentlemanly, he lacked gall to make oppression bitter. But a striking characteristic was his: he possessed the tact and astuteness to conceal from his tutor, until pretty late in their acquaintanceship, the complete revelation of his nature. Such traits as might be considered "slim" in a man full-grown are not unattractive in a schoolboy, and with these, as they manifested themselves in Feridun Mirza, I shall deal by-and-by. In the meantime, it will suffice to say that he is in the main a chip of the old block as it shapes itself in his uncle the Shah, both being sensitive, tender-hearted, and merciful beyond the ordinary, and of a temper essentially thoughtful, throughbred, and devout. As for Akbar Mirza, the Magnificent, he was a first-rate youngster at heart. Reduced to the ranks betimes, he proved both in his truthfulness and in his ingenuous swagger that he might yet be found fit to cut a dash and act a worthy part as a Provincial Governor. Providence even then was busy shuffling the cards whereon the fate of Persia depended. How would these pupils of his play the hands dealt out to them? The tutor, wondering, awoke at Bahram's voice, saying, "Here is the Tálár Tavílah, sahib."

My eyes opened wide with astonishment. "That!" I cried. "Surely that is the Agha Bashi's [chief eunuch's] stable-yard?

Why, I ride across it every day."

"That was why I smiled just now," said Bahram. "What did I say?"

"Changed indeed," I said, casting a glance around.

Of all the sights of Isfahan, this of the Tálár Tavílah, standing, as it does, within the walls of the palace enclosure, might be said to be the most pathetic in the pitiless decay of its splendour. Over all there hangs the shadow of lost causes and unabashed misrule. The burning sun beats down on the arid compound with never an intervention. The noble chenar-trees, long fallen to the axe, serve as carpentry nowadays. The water-channels are empty. The walls and mangers are crumbling to a fall. The pavilion itself recalls the mud huts of Kohrud. To make the decay worse confounded, there was life among the ruins. Half-a-dozen filly foals, let loose from the head eunuch's stables, kicked and gambolled in the sun. A lean hen, her every feather astare, chuckled to her brood in the dung. A pack of pariah dogs fought savagely over the bare carcass of a camel. A tame ibex took the channel at a leap, and nuzzled in Akbar's hand. Homayun Mirza, neighing in likeness of the filly foals, ran races with his shadow. Bahram Mirza knit a meditative brow, smiling his grave slow smile. Feridun's pensive countenance, as I presently discerned, was fixed on an indistinguishable object crouching in the dust. I thought I had never seen a figure so lonely, so nerveless, so inanimate. Its back was turned upon us, the head sunk, as if lifeless, on the breast.

"Look, sahib," cried Feridun Mirza. "What is that?" At sound of the voice the figure rose, slowly and painfully, to his feet, and faced about. Feeble, loosely knit, and in rags, the man, a black, stood within an inch or two of seven feet in height. I drew near: so pitiful a face I never saw. The cheeks were emaciated and devoid of hair. The eyes protruded, starting out of the sockets, but the sense in them was shut. The loose blubber lips babbled incoherently. I had certainly judged the man to be mad, but that there was never a mark of the beast in this sorry wreck of humanity. When a man in health loses his reason, the inhuman in the human being, the mere animal in him, is left. Such a one might be said to present a living picture of that revolting side of us which we strive to conceal even from ourselves. But in this pitiful specimen of mankind the human being and the animal alike were dead. Only the husk of him remained. How, then, could the creature be called insane merely? Bahram Mirza, smiling his grave slow smile, eked out the agony of the moment.

"That," he said, in reply to Feridun's question, "is the mad eunuch." Compassion touched the tutor to the core. Reaching out his hand, he patted the effete slave on the back. "Poor old fellow," he murmured; "poor old fellow."

The victim of the haram made no response. Standing amid the ruins of a glorious past, he was, mercifully, unconscious that the most pathetic wreck of all was himself—the symbol, as it were, of modern and moribund Persia.

Feridun Mirza, laying hold of my arm, drew me aside, begging me to take him away lest he should burst into tears.

"Que voulez-vous!" cried Akbar Mirza, who had overheard him. "En Perse, c'est comme ça. Isfahan, anyhow, is half the world." Whereat Bahram Mirza smiled his grave slow smile once more.

Opposite to the garden of the Tálár Tavílah are other houses and gardens where had dwelt, in the spacious days of Sháh Abbás, the imperial guards of the Ali Kapi or Sublime Porte, whither my pupils and I now directed our steps. These dwellings, one of which had been placed at my disposal, are separated from the Tálár Tavílah by a paved alley, between high walls, leading from the sacred gate to the royal palace within, and from the royal palace within, through the Ali Kapi, to the Meidán Sháh without. The *tálár* or hall above the gate faces the Meidán Sháh, is supported by twelve wooden columns, and contains a marble basin in the centre. It was there that Sháh Abbás gave audience to the ambassadors at Nawrúz (New Year's Day), and there he sat to witness the horse-races and polo-matches, the wild-beast fights and public entertainments, in the Royal Square below. The threshold stone of white porphyry was five inches high and semicircular, in the shape of an ass's back, and was situated either in the gateway or at the end of the paved alley leading thither. No one might cross this threshold with impunity; even the king on horseback dismounted in token of respect; everybody whom he delighted to honour went and kissed the stone; and the precincts were held an inviolable sanctuary, from which none but the sovereign could oust a fugitive, and he by starvation only. Hear what Tavernier said: "That day that the new King receives his Ensignia of Royalty, he goes to stride over that Stone, and if by negligence he should chance to touch it, there are four guards at the Gate that would make a show of thrusting him back again." Night and day the gate was left open, under the rule of the Sefavi Sháhs; nowadays, however, the Zillu's-Sultán, who has a morbid fear that he will meet with his father's fate, does not allow it to be used as a thoroughfare, lest assassins should break through and put him to death; but he pays respect to the old-time sanctity of the spot by dismounting from his horse, and by granting *bast* (sanctuary) to the evil-doer or the fugitive who shall seek refuge under the iron chain at the back. Of this I was not aware until Homayun Mirza, stealing behind me, snatched the whip from my grasp, and made a rush for the chain, vociferating his independence of all control, both tutorial and parental, in

the panting voice of one who had escaped the jaws of death by the skin of his teeth.

"I have *bast!*" he cried, sinking under the chain in a fainting condition. "The sahib can't touch me, nor can his Highness. I have *bast!* The sahib, who is an infidel, might thrash me hence, it is true; but I have his whip, thank God. Behold, I give it as an offering to Ali. I have *bast!* His Highness, it is true, might starve me out; but I have eaten, thank God, and am full. A demain, mosie mon ami et mon cher maître!" The inimitable intonation of the last word was a courteous declaration of his independence. "Begone!" he cried, leaping to his feet and clacking the whip about our ears. "My crimes are many, but I have *bast!* I would die in peace. Begone!" Homayun Mirza was the master of the situation.

Turning to Feridun Mirza, I expressed a desire to scale the stairs to the hall above, but he replied, saying—

"That is not possible, monsieur. The only men in Persia who are allowed to go upstairs are the Sháh, the Zillu's-Sultán, and the eunuchs of his haram. I am sorry, monsieur, but that is the custom of the country."

"You see, monsieur," said Akbar Mirza, "if you went upstairs, you would see the gardens of the haram and the wives of his Highness, and that would be contrary to the custom of the country. For the same reason the *muezzin* is not allowed to call to prayers from the minarets of the Musjid-i-Sháh, but is obliged to stand in the cage on the top of one of the *aiwans* (portals)."

All I said, in reply, was that I hoped my pupils would be content with one wife each. Our meeting with the mad eunuch served the purpose of pointing my remarks.

"You make mock at our cloistering of nuns," I ended by saying; "but it would appear that there are as many convents in Persia as there are men who can afford to keep a plurality of wives."

"His Highness, our father, is of your opinion, monsieur," said Bahram. "Woe to the son who should take to himself more than one wife! Our eldest brother, the Jelal-ed-Dowlet, has only one, and so has our second brother, Sultán Mahmúd Mirza, who joined your class last autumn. He is nearly seventeen years old, and will be a father soon. For my part, I who live in the haram have no wish to add to my sorrows in this life by taking to myself a 'plurality of wives.' Sorrows enough can be caused by one wife. I would not multiply those sorrows even by two."

"Ni moi non plus (nor would I either)," said Akbar Mirza. "For my experience is that it is the sorrows that are multiplied by the number of the wives—and not the pleasures! By the life of his Highness, I will have but one wife. May his Highness cut off my head if I have more!"

These sentiments were not to the liking of Homayun Mirza, who now came out of *bast* in

order to air his views on the subject.

"*Wai-wai-wai-wai-wai!*" he cried in unfeigned derision and disgust, buzzing around his brothers like a hornet about to sting. "And you call yourselves men, you weaklings! When I am King of Kurdistan I will have as many wives as I have fingers and toes, that I may not stumble in the paths of knowledge and in the garden of bliss. Twenty wives won't be too many for me."

"Don't talk Persian!" I cried.

"There are advantages in numbers—sometimes," said Feridun Mirza, whose discretion was not always proof against his sense of humour. "Take the case of his Highness, for instance. When the Sháh, his father, was assassinated last year by that son of a burned father, Mirza Reza, he was afraid of sleeping too soundly at nights lest he should be murdered also by some thrice-accursed Bábí. Accordingly, each of his wives took it in turn to keep him awake by beating him upon the breast for half an hour at a time, and this practice was kept up right through the night. The consequence is that his Highness, having become a slave of the habit, cannot lose himself in dreamland without being beaten upon the breast by his wives. What could he do if he had only one wife? Either he would die of insomnia or his wife would go mad from want of sleep. From this it is plain that there are advantages in numbers. I have spoken."

"Ass!" cried Bahram, who was sorely put about by Feridun's frank revelation of the secrets of the royal seraglio. "You deserve to have that braying tongue of yours cut out."

"If Feridun Mirza is an ass, you are his brother," said Akbar Mirza, who always took Feridun Mirza's part.

"Precisely," retorted Bahram, calmly; "and that is why I forbid him to defile the stables. He has a stall to himself; let him foul that!"

Then Feridun Mirza, raising his melodious voice in mellifluous Persian, burst from the bounds of decency which had kept him tongue-tied, Bahram Mirza retaliating in language scarcely less foul and indelicate. The abuse grew more and more scurrilous; I gave commands—much to the amazement of my pupils, who had believed their obscenities to be veiled from my understanding in the obscurity of their mother tongue; and then there was peace for a spell, Feridun Mirza blushing all over his face with shame and humiliation. When I came to trace the flow of filth to its source, as I did on the following morning, it was to learn from Dr Mirza Huseyn Khan that Persian children are taught such expressions as are unpublishable upon their mother's lap, and made to repeat them in the presence of their father. "Listen," the fond mother will say to her husband, "how prettily the little soul says '—— ——'!" Asked if the explanation applied to the children of the House of Kajar, the doctor smiled a sycophantic smile, but

was silent. The boys themselves, however, protested, both hands up, against so base an insinuation.

"Believe me, monsieur," said Feridun Mirza, who adored his mother, the "Little Lady," "it is not my mother who is to blame, but my old nurse and the maid-servants. It was they who taught me. I hope you will believe me for my mother's sake."

"I am delighted to hear what you say," I replied, "for Muhammad the Prophet was right when he said that heaven lies on the knees of the mother."

"The first word my mother ever taught me, monsieur," said Feridun Mirza, "was the word *múm* [bee's-wax], and that she effected, monsieur, first by pressing my lips together between her fingers, and then by opening them, saying over and over again the word *múm*. I should not like you to believe that our mothers teach us bad words. Believe me, monsieur, the contrary is the truth. When I was a child, I remember, my mother would put me in my *nanî* [hammock], a foot above the ground, and lull me to sleep by singing, and her songs were always good and not bad."

Here Bahram Mirza, who had been learning a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson, made an apt quotation, cocking his head over the left shoulder and closing his right eye the while :—

"'It is not yours, O Mother, to complain,
Not, Mother, yours to weep,
Though nevermore your son again
Shall to your bosom creep,
Though nevermore again you watch your baby sleep.'

Feridun Mirza is quite right, sir; our mothers are angels."

I believed the lads all the more readily because the indecent expressions, as I soon found out, were spoken from the lips outwards, and left no stain upon their minds. Hence it was a comparatively easy task for me to correct this bad habit of theirs, and I am glad to say that it was not long before all such expressions stopped together.

When we left the precincts of the Ali Kapi, it was to go to the orchard at the back of my house. At my suggestion that the space, a hundred yards by forty, might be used as a playing-field, the Zillu's-Sultán had given orders that the fruit-trees should be cut down, and the ground made level. The head eunuch, who took an all but paternal pride in every plant and tree within the palace enclosure, could scarce find breath to express his excited dismay at the proposal. But his protestations availed him not: my main object was to get up my pupils' strength by exercise, and no expenditure of sentiment by the Agha Bashi should be allowed to thwart my plans. Moreover — and this was the respect that gave my resolution a final clinch—no better ground for the purpose could be found thereabouts than that orchard of mine: therefore the fruit-trees—the pears and apples, the apricots and plums, the nectarines and peaches, the vines and pomegranates—had to fall to the axe. Still, the hour was near when, upon entering the garden, I was to feel an acute

twinge of remorse, and had to nerve my heart to the sacrifice by telling myself once more that it was not being made in the usual wanton way, but in the best interests of the young princes, whose health and strength should be my first care. Whilst the wood-cutter was wielding the axe, a couple of gardeners, in long blue smocks and baggy blue trousers, gathered the fruit, which they sliced in quarters and set on benches to dry in the sun. Upon these, the peaches and nectarines and plums, all the young princes pounced with greedy hands — save Feridun Mirza, whose tender heart was wrung at the sight of the fruitful trees lying in the dust. Turning his reproachful eyes, wet with tears, upon my face, he gave a sob, then strode to the wood-cutter, who was a Sonni and a Turk.

"Son of a burned father!" he cried. "Spare that peach-tree; it is the most fruitful in the whole orchard. It would be a shame to cut it down."

The Turk looked up, stroking his long red beard.

"Hukm-ast" (It is ordered), he replied.

"By whom?" cried Feridun Mirza, his eyes flashing.

"By his Highness the Prince and by his Excellency the tutor sahib," was the Turk's reply.

"Must the tree fall, monsieur?" asked Feridun.

"Undoubtedly," I replied. "Hukm-ast!"

"But those young trees, monsieur—you will have pity on them?"

Feridun's voice pleaded for a row of peach-trees in the middle of the orchard. It would be impossible for us to play football if they should be left standing. There was no help for it, the young trees had to go.

"Why should they be spared?" I asked.

"Because they have not borne fruit yet," replied Feridun Mirza.

"What a thoughful, tender-hearted, poetical little man you are! I participate in your grief, believe me; but you must have healthy outdoor exercise, my boy, and where else shall we find a playing-field?"

"Nowhere else, monsieur," said Feridun Mirza, regretfully.

"The trees would be in our way. Therefore they must be cut down. You might ask the wood-cutter what he thinks about it. He has a humorous eye of his own."

The question being raised, the wood-cutter stood up and answered, saying—

"Son of the Prince, may your nose grow fat and your heart the reverse of narrow! I had a daughter, my only child, and she died two months after her marriage with my brother's son. She had borne no fruit. There is no God but God. Are you answered?"

"Hukm-bud" (It was ordered), replied Feridun Mirza with undemonstrative composure. Then joining his brothers, he forgot all about the trees in the delight of eating of the fruit thereof. *Que voulez-vous!* In the moods of youth there is no transition: boys pass from

the pensive to the frolicsome at a single bound, their powers of concentration being of a piece with those of the ape; and Feridun Mirza for all his pensiveness is a true boy at heart.

But Bahram Mirza is of a different kidney. Unlike his brothers, who are nothing if not volatile in their attitude to study, Bahram Mirza's powers of concentration, savouring as they do of the uncanny, have been the means of developing in him a memory of remarkable tenacity. The first novel he ever read was a French translation of 'The Captain of the Vulture' by Miss Braddon. This book had been given to him by the Zillu's-Sultán in order that the lad might while away his leisure hours in the haram by putting the gist of it into Persian, and be the means of hastening his father's post-prandial nap by reading the translation aloud after tiffin. To that blessed consummation, in fact, each boy had been made the present of a book: Feridun Mirza, being the most backward, receiving the most difficult work—Baudelaire's admirable translation of Edgar Allan Poe's 'Tales,' of which more anon. When Bahram Mirza had finished his holiday task I called in doubt the thoroughness of his work, in order to test his knowledge of Miss Braddon's closely woven plot.

"Ah," cried Barham triumphantly, cocking his head over the left shoulder and closing the right eye, "there I waited for you, monsieur! It is true that this is the first Feringhi story I ever read, but it shall not be the last. His Highness is very pleased with Miss Braddon's work. Would you believe it, monsieur, his Highness could not sleep after *nahár* [lunch] to-day! and she kept me awake all night: I was reading, reading, reading!"

"Ah," I replied, "there I waited for you, my boy! What can you know about the book?"

"I will tell you the tale, monsieur, if you will listen."

"All right," I replied, forearming myself against disappointment by expecting nothing save a bare, blunt outline of the plot; "begin."

Bahram Mirza was on his mettle. He made an excellent start. First he told me the title of the opening chapter, then he related the incidents in an interesting narrative style.

"That is the end of chapter i.," he said. "Shall I go on, monsieur?"

"If you can," I replied.

He repeated the performance; after which he waited for the applause.

"Did you skip chapter iii.?" I asked.

The story took a third jump forward.

"Not so bad!" This from his tutor.

Bahram Mirza was nettled.

"Am I boring monsieur?" said he.

"Get along—get along!" I replied, feigning impatience. Chapter iv. contributed its quota to the plot.

"I lay odds that the next chapter is a blank!" I cried. Not a bit of it! The contents of every single chapter in the book had been as it were pigeon-

holed in the recesses of that tenacious memory of his: a *tour de force* all the more phenomenal because no such task had been set him by the Prince or by me.

"Are you pleased with me, sir?" he asked in English, when he had told me the story from beginning to end.

"You have paid Miss Braddon a marked compliment," I replied.

"She deserved it," was Bahram's courteous rejoinder. I turned to Feridun Mirza: "How are you getting on with Baudelaire's translation of Poe?" I asked.

"I cannot understand the French, monsieur," he replied; "it is too difficult for me."

"If I put 'The Fall of the House of Usher' into simple French, could you translate the tale into Persian?"

"Mais oui, monsieur!" cried Feridun Mirza, who is a born story-teller, and would make an entertaining dervish. His interest in the subject encouraged me to do my best to cheat the Zill of his customary siesta after tiffin. When I had put the story into simple words, paragraph by paragraph, and had pointed out the writer's skill in kindling in the reader an ever-increasing dread of the approaching doom, Feridun lending both his ears to my remarks, I made him sit down, and throw off his impression at a heat under an "instinctive rather than a technical guidance." His story was a great success. After tiffin he came rushing into my study, followed by his special eunuch.

"Ten *tumáns!*" he cried. "His Highness gave me ten *tumáns* for the story, and did not close an eye! Thank you, monsieur, thank you!"

"To-morrow," said I, "you shall tell his Highness the tale of 'The Black Cat.' I am busy. Good-bye."

"Thank you, monsieur. I will do even better work to-morrow, that his Highness may make me a present of fifteen *tumáns*," and so saying the lad went away, dreaming of the coveted reward.

The reward, however, remained a dream.

"How was that?" I asked on the morrow.

"Well, monsieur," replied Feridun Mirza, "when I was in the middle of the story his Highness, who had eaten a bowl of *piláw* and a dish of *chiláw*, and had drunk a lot of cold tea, gave a loud snore——"

"*Cold* tea!" I exclaimed.

"Mais oui, monsieur," said Feridun, delighted at my bewilderment; "cold tea is better for the teeth."

Akbar Mirza burst out laughing, and I cuffed his head for him.

"When a Persian takes upon himself the shame of wine," he explained, rubbing his impudent face, "he says that he has been drinking 'cold tea.'"

"'The Murder in the Rue Morgue' *versus* 'cold tea'—that shall be our next match. I lay odds on the 'cold tea' as a soporific."

"And so do I, monsieur," said Feridun Mirza, whose hopes of reward were dashed by his recent failure. His heart was no longer in the work.

"It is fortunate," he said, when he had translated the third story with my assistance, "that his Highness is very sleepy now after his *nahár*."

"Why 'fortunate'?" I asked.

"Because," replied Feridun, looking very knowing. I had to content myself with the explanation.

"Did you have any success with your recital of 'The Murder in the Rue Morgue'?" I asked next day.

"None at all, monsieur," replied Feridun Mirza.

"I am sorry, my boy."

"Oh, it doesn't matter now, monsieur."

"Shall I help you with the fourth story?"

"No, thank you, monsieur. I think I can manage by myself now."

"You are getting more used to the style, I suppose."

"That is one reason, monsieur."

The second reason was long in revealing itself, and in the end it was an accident that enlightened my fatuous obtuseness.

Many days wore away. Whenever it occurred to me to ask Feridun how he was getting on with his stories, I received the same reply—

"Very well, thank you, monsieur. His Highness always falls asleep as soon as I begin."

"Do you need my help in your work?" I would ask.

"No, thank you, monsieur," he would reply. "I can get along now all by myself, and his Highness is always very sleepy after eating."

But at the end of the month, much to my surprise, he came into class and begged me to lend him my assistance. His face wore a crestfallen expression. When I asked him which of the tales remained to be translated, his face took on a more dejected look than ever.

"His Highness is very wide awake now, monsieur," he replied at last.

"Don't parry the question. Frankness is the best policy."

"Well, monsieur, I have done 'The Fall of the House of Usher,' and 'The Black Cat,' and 'The Murder in the Rue Morgue,' and——" He raised his eyes to mine, taking the measure of my mood, then turned a trifle pale as to the gills.

"And——?"

Feridun's eyes fell. "And his Highness is tired of them," he replied all in a breath. "He wants something new."

Akbar Mirza, flinging back his head, burst into that characteristic laugh of his, frank, hearty, fresh, and guileless.

"'His Highness is very wide awake'!" he cried in a convulsion of mirth. "'His Highness wants something new'!"

What I said was "Ah!" What I did was to reach out for the whip.

"Monsieur," said Feridun Mirza in a plaintive voice, "I will tell you the truth. When I told his Highness the story of 'The House of Usher' he was very pleased, and gave me ten *tumáns*. But when I told him the tale of 'The Black Cat,' which I had translated ever so much better, he fell asleep, and so I lost my present. But notwithstanding my disappointment, I persevered, thank God,

and next day I recited 'The Murder in the Rue Morgue.' Then, when his Highness fell asleep yet a second time, the Devil came and tempted me, saying, 'You have translated three stories, two of which his Highness has not heard through his falling asleep. Why should you translate any more? All you need to do will be to repeat the stories over and over again.' And this I did, monsieur, keeping 'The Fall of the House of Usher' for Mondays and Thursdays, and 'The Black Cat' for Tuesdays and Fridays, and 'The Murder in the Rue Morgue' for Wednesdays and Saturdays. And that is the truth, monsieur, and it was the Devil who told me to do it."

"Then you must be the Devil's whipping-boy," I replied. "Come and receive your punishment like a man."

"But, monsieur, his Highness gave me the sticks when he found me out." Feridun Mirza's voice pleaded that enough was as good as a feast.

"And how did his Highness find you out?" I asked.

"Well, monsieur, I made a mistake. When I was in the middle of 'The Black Cat,' his Highness, who had every appearance of being asleep, opened his eyes and said, 'You read that story yesterday.' Then I knew that I had put the wrong story into my pocket. It was a Saturday, so I begged pardon of his Highness, and went and fetched 'The Murder in the Rue Morgue,' which I began to recite, when his Highness woke up again and said, 'I want something new!' Then, the Devil tempting me yet a second time, I fell to reading the story of 'The Fall of the House of Usher,' and this I did to pacify his Highness, who had been much pleased with the story. Monsieur will judge of my consternation when I tell him that his Highness, now wide awake, seized me by the ankle and gave me six strokes of his cane on the soles of my feet, saying that the story had given him the *kábús* [nightmare] half-a-dozen times at least!"

The unexpected climax threw Akbar Mirza into a second fit of laughter.

"Feridun Mirza, Prince Fortunate, is not an angel after all!" he cried, fit to burst his sides with merriment.

"Neither is he made of musk and of amber!" cried Homayun in Persian.

"He is famous, because he is liberal and just," said Bahram Mirza, smiling a grave ironic smile.

"Let us practise justice and liberality, then," sang out Akbar Mirza, "to the end that we may become even as Feridun Mirza."

"And that is the very advice that I was about to give you," said the impenitent sinner. "I should have used the self-same words."

Then the two lads, having brought the tips of their fingers together, raised them to their lips, and from their lips to their foreheads, in token that their thoughts had jumped together.

"That is a Persian custom," said Bahram Mirza. "We are always of one mind, you and I, monsieur, so let us do the same thing."

LORD JIM: A SKETCH.[1]

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"THE coast (I saw it nearly two years afterwards) is straight and sombre, and faces a misty ocean. Red trails are seen like cataracts of rust streaming under the dark green foliage of bushes and creepers clothing the low cliffs. Swampy plains open out at the mouth of rivers, with a view of jagged blue peaks beyond the vast forests. In the offing a chain of islands, dark, crumbling shapes, stand out in the everlasting sunlit haze like the remnants of a wall breached by the sea.

"There is a village of fisher-folk at the mouth of the Batu Kring branch of the estuary. The river, which had been closed so long, was open then, and Stein's little schooner, in which I had my passage, worked her way up in three tides without being exposed to a fusilade from 'irresponsive parties.' Such a state of affairs belonged already to ancient history, if I could believe the elderly headman of the fishing village, who came on board to act as a sort of pilot. He talked to me (the second white man he had ever seen) with confidence, and most of his talk was of the first white man he had ever seen. He called him Tuan Jim, and the tone of his references was made remarkable by a strange mixture of familiarity and awe. They, in the village, were under that lord's special protection, which showed that Jim bore no grudge. If he had warned me that I would hear of him it was perfectly true. I was hearing of him. There was already a story that the tide had turned two hours before its time to help him on his journey up the river. The talkative old man himself had steered the canoe and had marvelled at the phenomenon. Moreover, all the glory was in his family. His son and his son-in-law had paddled; but they were only youths without experience, who did not notice the speed of the canoe till he pointed out to them the amazing fact.

"Jim's coming to that fishing village was a blessing; but to them, as to many of us, the blessing came heralded by terrors. So many generations had been released since the last white man had visited the river that the very tradition had been lost. The appearance of the being that descended upon them and demanded inflexibly to be taken up to Patusan was discomposing; his insistance was alarming; his generosity more than suspicious. It was

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an unheard-of request. There was no precedent. What would the Rajah say to this? What would he do to them? The best part of the night was spent in consultation; but the immediate risk from the anger of that strange man seemed so great that at last a cranky dug-out was got ready. The women shrieked with grief as it put off. A fearless old hag cursed the stranger.

"He sat in it, as I've told you, on his tin box, nursing the unloaded revolver on his lap. He sat with precaution—than which there is nothing more fatiguing—and thus entered the land he was destined to fill with the fame of his virtues, from the blue peaks inland to the white ribbon of surf on the coast. At the first bend he lost sight of the sea with its labouring waves for ever rising, sinking, and vanishing to rise again — the very image of struggling mankind,—and faced the immovable forests rooted deep in the soil, soaring towards the sunshine, everlasting in the shadowy might of their tradition, like life itself. And his opportunity sat veiled by his side like an Eastern bride waiting to be uncovered by the hand of the master. He too was the heir of a shadowy and mighty tradition! He told me, however, that he had never in his life felt so depressed and tired as in that canoe. All the movement he dared to allow himself was to reach, as it were by stealth, after the shell of half a cocoanut floating between his shoes, and bale some of the water out with a carefully restrained action. He discovered how hard the lid of a block-tin case was to sit upon. He had heroic health; but several times during that journey he experienced fits of giddiness, and between whiles he speculated hazily as to the size of the blister the sun was raising on his back. For amusement he tried by looking ahead to decide whether the muddy object he saw lying on the water's edge was a log of wood or an alligator. Only very soon he had to give that up. No fun in it. Always alligator. One of them flopped into the river and all but capsized the canoe. But this excitement was over directly. Then in a long empty reach he was very grateful to a troop of monkeys who came right down on the bank and made an insulting hullabaloo on his passage. Such was the way in which he was approaching greatness as genuine as any man ever achieved. Principally, he longed for sunset; and meantime his three paddlers were preparing to put into execution their plan of delivering him up to the Rajah.

"'I suppose I must have been stupid with fatigue, or perhaps I did doze off for a time,' he said. The first thing he knew was his canoe coming to the bank. He became instantaneously aware of the forest having been left behind, of the first houses being visible higher up, of a stockade on his left, and of his boatmen leaping out together upon a low point of land and taking to their heels. Instinctively he leaped out after them. At first

he thought himself deserted for some inconceivable reason, but he heard excited shouts, a gate swung open, and a lot of people poured out, making towards him. At the same time a boat full of armed men appeared on the river and came alongside his empty canoe, thus shutting off his retreat.

"'I was too startled to be quite cool — don't you know? and if that revolver had been loaded I would have shot somebody—perhaps two, three bodies, and that would have been the end of me. But it wasn't. . . .' 'Why not?' I asked. 'Well, I couldn't fight the whole population, and I wasn't coming to them as if I were afraid of my life,' he said, with just a faint hint of his stubborn sulkiness in the glance he gave me. I refrained from pointing out to him that they could not have known the chambers were actually empty. He had to satisfy himself in his own way. . . . 'Anyhow it wasn't,' he repeated good-humouredly, 'and so I just stood still and asked them what was the matter. That seemed to strike them dumb. I saw some of these thieves going off with my box. That long-legged old scoundrel Kassim (I'll show him to you to-morrow) ran out fussing to me about the Rajah wanting to see me. I said, "All right"; I too wanted to see the Rajah, and I simply walked in through the gate and—and—here I am.' He laughed, and then with unexpected emphasis, 'And do you know what's the best in it?' he asked. 'I'll tell you. It's the knowledge that had I been wiped out it is this place that would have been the loser.'

"He spoke thus to me before his house on that evenind I've mentioned—after we hag watched the moon float away above the chasm between the hills like an ascending spirit out of a grave; its sheen descended, cold and pale, like the ghost of dead sunlight. There is something haunting in the light of the moon; it has all the dispassionateness of a disembodied soul, and something of its inconceivable mystery. It is to our sunshine which—say what you like—is all we have to live by, what the echo is to the sound: misleading and confusing whether the note be mocking or sad. It robs all forms of matter—which, after all, is our domain — of their substance, and gives a sinister reality to shadows alone. And the shadows were very real around us, but Jim by my side looked very stalwart, as though nothing — not even the occult power of moonlight—could rob him of his reality in my eyes. Perhaps, indeed, nothing could touch him since he had survived the assault of the dark powers. All was silent, all was still; even on the river the moonbeams slept as on a pool. It was the moment of high water, a moment of immobility that accentuated the utter isolation of this lost corner of the earth. The houses crowding along the wide shining sweep without ripple or glitter, stepping into the water in a line of jostling, vague, grey, silvery forms mingled with black masses of shadow, were like a spectral

herd of shapeless creatures pressing forward to drink in a spectral and lifeless stream. Here and there a red gleam twinkled within the bamboo walls, warm, like a living spark, significant of human affections, of shelter, of repose.

"He confessed to me that he often watched these tiny warm gleams go out one by one, that he loved to see people go to sleep under his eyes, confident in the security of to-morrow. 'Peaceful here, hey?' he asked. He was not eloquent, but there was a deep meaning in the words that followed. 'Look at these houses; there's not one where I am not trusted. Jove! I told you I would hang on. Ask any man, woman, or child . . .' He paused. 'Well, I am all right anyhow.'

"I observed quickly that he had found that out in the end. I had been sure of it, I added. He shook his head. 'Were you?' He pressed my arm lightly above the elbow. 'Well, then—you were right.'

"There was elation and pride, there was awe almost, in that low exclamation. 'Jove!' he cried, 'only think what it is to me.' Again he pressed my arm. 'And you asked me whether I thought of leaving. Good God! I! want to leave! Especially now after what you told me of Mr Stein's . . . Leave! Why! That's what I was afraid of. It would have been—it would have been harder than dying. No—on my word. Don't laugh. I must feel—every day, every time I open my eyes—that I am trusted—that nobody has a right—don't you know? Leave! For where? What for? To get what?'

"I had told him (indeed it was the main object of my visit) that it was Stein's intention to present him at once with the house and the stock of trading goods, on certain easy conditions which would make the transaction perfectly regular and valid. He began to snort and plunge at first. 'Confound your delicacy!' I shouted. 'It isn't Stein at all. It's giving you what you had made for yourself. And in any case keep your remarks for M'Neil—when you meet him in the other world. I hope it won't happen soon. . . .' He had to give in to my arguments, because all his conquests, the trust, the fame, the friendships, the love,—all these things that made him master had made him a captive too. He looked with an owner's eye at the peace of the evening, at the river, at the houses, at the everlasting life of the forests, at the life of the old mankind, at the secrets of the land, at the pride of his own heart; but it was they that possessed him and made him their own to the innermost thought, to the slightest stir of blood, to his last breath.

"It was something to be proud of. I too was proud—for him, if not so certain of the fabulous value of the bargain. It was wonderful. It was not so much of his fearlessness that I thought. It is strange how little account I took of it: as if it had been something too

conventional to be at the root of the matter. No. I was more struck by the other gifts he had displayed. He had proved his grasp of the unfamiliar situation, his intellectual alertness in that field of thought. There was his readiness too! Amazing. And all this had come to him in a manner like keen scent to a well-bred hound. He was not eloquent, but there was a dignity in this constitutional reticence, there was a high seriousness in his stammerings. He had still his old trick of stubborn blushing. Now and then, though, a word, a sentence, would escape him that showed how deeply, how solemnly, he felt about that work which had given him the certitude of rehabilitation. That is why he seemed to love the land and the people with a sort of fierce egoism, with a contemptuous tenderness."

CHAPTER XXV.

"'This is where I was prisoner for three days,' he murmured to me (it was on the occasion of our visit to the Rajah), while we were making our way slowly through a kind of awestruck riot of dependants across Tunku Allong's courtyard. 'Filthy place, isn't it? And I couldn't get anything to eat either, unless I made a row about it, and then it was only a small plate of rice and a fried fish not much bigger than a stickleback — confound them! Jove! I've been hungry prowling inside this stinking enclosure with some of these vagabonds shoving their mugs right under my nose. I had given up that famous revolver of yours at the first demand. Glad to get rid of the bally thing. Look like a fool walking about with an empty shooting-iron in my hand.' At that moment we came into the presence, and he became unflinchingly grave and complimentary with his late captor. Oh! magnificent! I want to laugh when I think of it. But I was impressed too. The old disreputable Tunku Allong could not help showing his fear (he was no hero, for all the tales of his hot youth he was fond of telling); and at the same time there was a wistful confidence in his manner towards his late prisoner. Note! Even where he would be most hated he was still trusted. Jim—as far as I could follow the conversation—was improving the occasion by the delivery of a lecture. Some poor villagers had been waylaid and robbed while on their way to Doramin's house with a few pieces of gum or bee's-wax which they wished to exchange for rice. 'It was Doramin who was a thief,' burst out the Rajah. A shaking fury seemed to enter that old frail body. He writhed weirdly on his mat, gesticulating with his hands and feet, tossing the tangled strings of his mop—an impotent incarnation of rage. There were staring eyes and dropping

jaws all around us. Jim began to speak. Resolutely, coolly, and for some time he enlarged upon the text that no man should be prevented from getting his food and his chilren's food honestly. The other sat like a tailor at his board, one palm on each knee, his head low, and fixing Jim through the grey hair that fell over his very eyes. When Jim had done there was a great stillness. Nobody seemed to breathe even; no one made a sound till the old Rajah sighed faintly, and looking up, with a toss of his head, said quickly, 'You hear, my people! No more of these little games.' This decree was received in profound silence. A rather heavy man, evidently in a position of confidence, with intelligent eyes, a bony, broad, very dark face, and a cheerily officious manner (I learned later on he was the executioner), presented to us two cups of coffee on a brass tray, which he took from the hands of an inferior attendant. 'You needn't drink,' muttered Jim very rapidly. I didn't perceive the meaning at first, and only looked at him. He took a good sip and sat composedly, holding the saucer in his left hand. In a moment I felt excessively annoyed. 'Why the devil,' I whispered, smiling at him amiably, 'do you expose me to such a stupid risk?' I drank, of course, there was nothing for it, while he gave no sign, and almost immediately we took our leave. While we were going down the courtyard to our boat, escorted by the intelligent and cheery executioner, he said he was very sorry. It was the barest chance, of course. Personally he thought nothing of poison. The remotest chance. He was — he assured me — considered infinitely more useful than dangerous, and so . . . 'But the Rajah is afraid of you abominably. Anybody can see that,' I argued with, I own, a certain peevishness, and all the time watching anxiously for the first twist of some sort of ghastly colic or other. I was awfully disgusted. 'If I am to do any good here and preserve my position,' he said, taking his seat by my side in the boat, 'I must stand the risk: I take it once every month, at least. Many people trust me to do that—for them. Afraid of me. That's just it. Most likely he is afraid of me because I am not afraid of his coffee.' Then showing me a place on the north front of the stockade where the pointed tops of several stakes were broken, 'This is where I leaped over on my third day in Patusan. They haven't put new stakes there yet. Good leap, eh?' A moment later we passed the mouth of a muddy creek. 'This is my second leap. I had a bit of a run and took this one flying, but fell short. Plop!—to my waist. Thought I would leave my skin there. Lost my shoes struggling. And all the time I was thinking to myself how beastly it would be to get a jab with a bally long spear when sticking in the mud like this. I remember how sick I felt wriggling in that mud. I mean really sick—as

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CHAPTER XXV.

"'This is where I was prisoner for three days,' he murmured to me (it was on the occasion of our visit to the Rajah), while we were making our way slowly through a kind of awestruck riot of dependants across Tunku Allong's courtyard. 'Filthy place, isn't it? And I couldn't get anything to eat either, unless I made a row about it, and then it was only a small plate of rice and a fried fish not much bigger than a stickleback — confound them! Jove! I've been hungry prowling inside this stinking enclosure with some of these vagabonds shoving their mugs right under my nose. I had given up that famous revolver of yours at the first demand. Glad to get rid of the bally thing. Look like a fool walking about with an empty shooting-iron in my hand.' At that moment we came into the presence, and he became unflinchingly grave and complimentary with his late captor. Oh! magnificent! I want to laugh when I think of it. But I was impressed too. The old disreputable Tunku Allong could not help showing his fear (he was no hero, for all the tales of his hot youth he was fond of telling); and at the same time there was a wistful confidence in his manner towards his late prisoner. Note! Even where he would be most hated he was still trusted. Jim—as far as I could follow the conversation—was improving the occasion by the delivery of a lecture. Some poor villagers had been waylaid and robbed while on their way to Doramin's house with a few pieces of gum or bee's-wax which they wished to exchange for rice. 'It was Doramin who was a thief,' burst out the Rajah. A shaking fury seemed to enter that old frail body. He writhed weirdly on his mat, gesticulating with his hands and feet, tossing the tangled strings of his mop—an impotent incarnation of rage. There were staring eyes and dropping

jaws all around us. Jim began to speak. Resolutely, coolly, and for some time he enlarged upon the text that no man should be prevented from getting his food and his chilren's food honestly. The other sat like a tailor at his board, one palm on each knee, his head low, and fixing Jim through the grey hair that fell over his very eyes. When Jim had done there was a great stillness. Nobody seemed to breathe even; no one made a sound till the old Rajah sighed faintly, and looking up, with a toss of his head, said quickly, 'You hear, my people! No more of these little games.' This decree was received in profound silence. A rather heavy man, evidently in a position of confidence, with intelligent eyes, a bony, broad, very dark face, and a cheerily officious manner (I learned later on he was the executioner), presented to us two cups of coffee on a brass tray, which he took from the hands of an inferior attendant. 'You needn't drink,' muttered Jim very rapidly. I didn't perceive the meaning at first, and only looked at him. He took a good sip and sat composedly, holding the saucer in his left hand. In a moment I felt excessively annoyed. 'Why the devil,' I whispered, smiling at him amiably, 'do you expose me to such a stupid risk?' I drank, of course, there was nothing for it, while he gave no sign, and almost immediately we took our leave. While we were going down the courtyard to our boat, escorted by the intelligent and cheery executioner, he said he was very sorry. It was the barest chance, of course. Personally he thought nothing of poison. The remotest chance. He was — he assured me — considered infinitely more useful than dangerous, and so . . . 'But the Rajah is afraid of you abominably. Anybody can see that,' I argued with, I own, a certain peevishness, and all the time watching anxiously for the first twist of some sort of ghastly colic or other. I was awfully disgusted. 'If I am to do any good here and preserve my position,' he said, taking his seat by my side in the boat, 'I must stand the risk: I take it once every month, at least. Many people trust me to do that—for them. Afraid of me. That's just it. Most likely he is afraid of me because I am not afraid of his coffee.' Then showing me a place on the north front of the stockade where the pointed tops of several stakes were broken, 'This is where I leaped over on my third day in Patusan. They haven't put new stakes there yet. Good leap, eh?' A moment later we passed the mouth of a muddy creek. 'This is my second leap. I had a bit of a run and took this one flying, but fell short. Plop!—to my waist. Thought I would leave my skin there. Lost my shoes struggling. And all the time I was thinking to myself how beastly it would be to get a jab with a bally long spear when sticking in the mud like this. I remember how sick I felt wriggling in that mud. I mean really sick—as

if I had bitten something rotten.'

"That's how it was—and the opportunity ran by his side, leaped over the gap, floundered in the mud . . . still veiled. The unexpectedness of his coming was the only thing, you understand, that saved him from being at once despatched with krises and flung into the river. They had him, but it was like getting hold of an apparition, a wraith, a portent. What did it mean? What to do with it? Was it too late to conciliate him? Hadn't he better be killed without more delay? But what would happen then? Wretched old Allong went nearly mad with apprehension and through the difficulty of making up his mind. Several times the council was broken up, and the advisers made a break helter-skelter for the door and out on to the verandah. One—it is said—even jumped down to the ground — twenty odd feet, I should judge—and broke his leg. The royal governor of Patusan had bizarre mannerisms, and one of them was to introduce boastful rhapsodies into every arduous discussion, when, getting gradually excited, he would end by flying off his perch with a kris in his hand. But, barring such interruptions, the deliberations upon Jim's fate went on night and day.

"Meanwhile he wandered about the courtyard, shunned by some, glared at by others, but watched by all, and practically at the mercy of the first casual ragamuffin with a chopper, in there. He took possession of a small tumble-down shed to sleep in; the effluvia of filth and rotten matter incommoded him greatly: it seems he had not lost his appetite though, because—he told me—he had been hungry all the blessed time. Now and again 'some fussy ass' deputed from the council-room would come out running to him, and in honeyed tones would administer amazing interrogatories. 'Were the Dutch coming to take the country? Would the white man like to go back down the river? What was the object of coming to such a miserable country? The Rajah wanted to know whether the white man could repair a watch?' They did actually bring out to him a nickel clock of New England make, and out of sheer unbearable boredom he busied himself in trying to get the alarum to work. It was apparently when thus occupied in his shed that the true perception of his extreme peril dawned upon him. He dropped the thing—he says—'like a hot potato,' and walked out hastily, without the slightest idea of what he would, or indeed could, do. He only knew that the position was intolerable. He strolled aimlessly beyond a sort of ramshackle little granary on posts, and his eyes fell on the broken stakes of the palisade; and then — he says — at once, without any mental process as it were, without any stir of emotion, he set about his escape as if executing a plan matured for a month. He walked off carelessly to give himself a good

run, and when he faced about there was some dignitary with two spearmen in attendance close at his elbow ready with a question. He started off 'from under his very nose,' went over 'like a bird,' and landed on the other side with a fall that jarred all his bones and seemed to split his head. He picked himself up instantly. He never thought of anything at the time; all he could remember—he said—was a great yell; the first houses of Patusan were before him four hundred yards away; he saw the creek, and as it were mechanically put on more pace. The earth seemed fairly to fly backwards under his feet. He took off from the last dry spot, felt himself flying through the air, felt himself, without any shock, planted upright in an extremely soft and sticky mudbank. It was only when he tried to move his legs and found he couldn't that, in his own words, 'he came to himself.' He began to think of the 'bally long spears.' As a matter of fact, considering that the people inside the stockade had to run to the gate, then get down to the landing-place, get into boats, and pull round a point of land, he had more advance than he imagined. Besides, it being low water, the creek was without water—you couldn't call it dry,—and practically he was safe for a time from everything but a very long shot perhaps. The higher firm ground was about six feet in front of him. 'I thought I would have to die there all the same,' he said. He reached and grabbed desperately with his hands, and only succeeded in gathering a horrible cold shiny heap of slime against his breast — up to his very chin. It seemed to him he was burying himself alive, and then he struck out madly, scattering the mud with his fists. It fell on his head, on his face, in his eyes, in his mouth. He told me that he remembered suddenly the courtyard, as you remember a place where you had been very happy years ago. He longed—so he said—to be back there again, mending the clock. Mending the clock—that was the idea. He made efforts, tremendous sobbing gasping efforts, efforts that seemed to burst his eyeballs in their sockets and make him blind, and culminating into one mighty supreme effort in the darkness to crack the earth asunder, to throw it off his limbs — and he felt himself creeping feebly up the bank. He lay full length on the firm ground and saw the light, the sky. Then as a sort of happy thought the notion came to him that he would go to sleep. He will have it that he *did* actually go to sleep; that he slept—perhaps for a minute, perhaps for twenty seconds, or only for one second, but he recollects distinctly a violent convulsive start he gave before he uprose muddy from head to foot and stood there, thinking he was alone of his kind for hundreds of miles, alone, with no help, no sympathy, no pity to expect from any one, like a hunted wild beast. The first houses were not more than twenty yards from him; and it was the

desperate screaming of a frightened woman trying to carry off a child that started him again. He pelted straight on in his socks, beplastered with filth out of all semblance to a human being. He traversed more than half the length of the settlement. The nimbler women fled right and left, the slower men just dropped whatever they had in their hands, and remained petrified with dropping jaws. He was a flying terror. He says he noticed the little children trying to run for life, falling on their little stomachs and kicking. He swerved between two houses up a slope, clambered in desperation over a barricade of felled trees (there wasn't a week without some fight in Patusan at that time), burst through a fence into a maize-patch, where a scared boy flung a stick at him, blundered upon a path, and ran all at once into the arms of several startled men. He just had breath enough to gasp out, 'Doramin! Doramin!' He remembers being half-carried, half-rushed to the top of the slope, and in a vast enclosure with palms and fruit-trees being run up to a large man sitting massively in a chair in the midst of the greatest possible commotion and excitement. He fumbled in mud and clothes to produce the ring, and, finding himself suddenly on his back, wondered who had knocked him down. They had simply let him go—don't you know?—but he couldn't stand. At the foot of the slope random shots were fired, and above the roofs of the settlement there rose a dull roar of amazement. But he was safe. Doramin's people were barricading the gate and pouring water down his throat; Doramin's old wife, full of business and commiseration, was issuing shrill orders to her girls. 'The old woman,' he said softly, 'made a to-do over me as if I had been her own son. They put me into an immense bed—her state bed—and she ran in and out wiping her eyes to give me pats on the back. I must have been a pitiful object. I just lay there like a log for I don't know how long.'

"He seemed to have a great liking for Doramin's old wife. She on her side had taken a motherly fancy to him. She had a round, nut-brown, soft face, all fine wrinkles, large, bright red lips (she chewed betel assiduously), and screwed up, winking, benevolent old eyes. She was constantly in movement, scolding busily and ordering unceasingly a whole battalion of young women with clear brown faces and big grave eyes, her daughters, her servants, her slave-girls. You know how it is in these households: it's generally impossible to tell the difference. She was very spare, and even her ample outer garment, fastened in front with jewelled clasps, had somehow a skimpy effect. Her dark bare feet were thrust into yellow straw slippers of Chinese make. I have seen her myself flitting about with her extremely thick, long, grey hair falling about her shoulders. She uttered homely shrewd sayings, was of noble birth, and was eccentric and

arbitrary. In the afternoon she would sit in a very roomy armchair, opposite her husband, gazing steadily through a wide opening in the wall which gave an extensive view of the settlement and the river.

"She invariably tucked up her feet under her, but old Doramin sat squarely, sat imposingly as a mountain sits on a plain. He was only of the *nakhoda* or merchant class, but the respect shown to him and the dignity of his bearing were very striking. He was the chief of the second power in Patusan. The immigrants from Celebes (about sixty families that, with dependants and so on, could muster some two hundred men 'wearing the kris') had elected him years ago for their head. The men of that race are intelligent, enterprising, revengeful, but with a more frank courage than the other Malays, and restless under oppression. They formed the party opposed to the Rajah. Of course the quarrels were for trade. This was the primary cause of faction fights, of the sudden outbreaks that would fill this or that part of the settlement with smoke, flame, the noise of shots and shrieks. Villages were burnt, men were dragged into the Rajah's stockade to be killed or tortured for the crime of trading with anybody else but himself. Only a day or two before Jim's arrival several heads of households in the very fishing village that was afterwards taken under his especial protection had been driven over the cliffs by a party of Rajah's spearmen, on suspicion of having been collecting edible birds' nests for a Celebes trader. Rajah Allong pretended to be the only trader in his country, and the penalty for the breach of the monopoly was death; but his idea of trading was indistinguishable from the commonest forms of robbery. His cruelty and rapacity had no other bounds than his cowardice, and he was afraid of the organised power of the Celebes men, only —till Jim came—he was not afraid enough to keep quiet. He struck at them through his subjects, and thought himself pathetically in the right. The situation was complicated by a wandering stranger, an Arab half-bred, who, I believe, on purely religious grounds, had incited the tribes in the interior (the bush-folk, as Jim himself called them) to rise, and had established himself in a fortified camp on the summit of one of the twin hills. He hung over the town of Patusan like a hawk over a poultry-yard, but he devastated the open country. Whole villages, deserted, rotted on their blackened posts over the banks of clear streams, dropping piecemeal into the water the grass of their walls, the leaves of their roofs, with a curious effect of natural decay as if they had been a form of vegetation stricken by a blight at its very root. The two parties in Patusan were not sure which one this partisan most desired to plunder. The Rajah intrigued with him feebly. Some of the Bugis settlers, weary with endless insecurity, were half inclined to call him in. The younger

spirits amongst them, chaffing, advised to 'get Sherif Ali with his wild men and drive the Rajah Allong out of the country.' Doramin restrained them with difficulty. He was growing old, and, though his influence had not diminished, the situation was getting beyond him. This was the state of affairs when Jim, bolting from the Rajah's stockade, appeared before the chief of the Bugis, produced the ring, and was received, in a manner of speaking, into the heart of the community."

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Doramin was one of the most remarkable men of his race I had ever seen. His bulk for a Malay was immense, but he did not look merely fat; he looked imposing, monumental. This motionless body clad in rich stuffs, coloured silks, gold embroideries; this huge head, enfolded in a red-and-gold headkerchief; the flat, big, round face, wrinkled, furrowed, with two semicircular heavy folds starting on each side of wide, fierce nostrils, and enclosing a thick-lipped mouth; the throat like a bull; the vast corrugated brow overhanging the staring proud eyes,—made a whole that, once seen, can never be forgotten. His impassive repose (he seldom stirred a limb when once he sat down) was like a display of dignity. He was never known to raise his voice. It was a hoarse and powerful murmur, slightly veiled as if heard from a distance. When he walked two short, sturdy young fellows, naked to the waist, in white sarongs and with black skull-caps on the backs of their heads, sustained his elbows: they would ease him down and stand behind his chair till he wanted to rise, when he would turn his head slowly, as if with difficulty, to the right and to the left, and then they would catch him under his armpits and help him up. For all that, there was nothing of a cripple about him: on the contrary, all his ponderous movements were like manifestations of a mighty deliberate force. It was generally believed he consulted his wife as to public affairs; but nobody, as far as I know, had ever heard them exchange a single word. When they sat in state by the wide opening it was in silence. They could see below them in the declining light the vast expanse of the forest country, a dark sleeping sea of sombre green undulating as far as the violet and purple range of mountains; the shining sinuosity of the river like an immense letter S of beaten silver; the brown ribbon of houses following the sweep of both banks, overtopped by the twin-hills uprising above the nearer tree-tops. It was a wonderful contrast: she, light, delicate, spare, quick, a little witch-like, with a touch of motherly fussiness in her repose; he, facing her, immense and heavy, like a figure of a man roughly fashioned of stone, with something magnanimous and ruthless in his

immobility. The son of these old people was a most distinguished youth.

"They had him late in life. Perhaps he was not really so young as he looked. Four- or five-and-twenty is not so young when a man is already father of a family at eighteen. When he entered the large room, lined and carpeted with fine mats, and with a high ceiling of white sheeting, where the couple sat in state surrounded by a most deferential retinue, he would make his way straight to Doramin, to kiss his hand—which the other abandoned to him, majestically — and then would step across to stand by his mother's chair. I suppose I may say they idolised him, but I never caught them giving him an overt glance. Those, it is true, were public functions. The room was generally thronged. The solemn formality of greetings and leave-takings, the profound respect expressed in gestures, on the faces, in the low whispers, is simply indescribable. 'It's well worth seeing,' Jim had assured me while we were crossing the river, and coming back. 'They are like people in a book, aren't they?' he said triumphantly. 'And Dain Waris — their son — is the best friend (barring you) I ever had. What Mr Stein would call a good "war-comrade." I was in luck. Jove! I was in luck when I tumbled amongst them at my last gasp.' He meditated with bowed head, then rousing himself he added—

"'Of course I didn't go to sleep over it, but . . .' He paused again. 'It seemed to come to me,' he murmured. 'All at once I saw what I had to do . . .'

"There was no doubt that it had come to him; and it had come through war, too, as is natural, since this power that came to him was the power to make peace. It is in this sense alone that might so often *is* right. You must not think he had seen his way at once. When he arrived the Bugis community was in a most critical position. 'They were all afraid,' he said to me—'each man afraid for himself; while I could see as plain as possible that they must do something at once if they did not want to go under one after another, what between the Rajah and that vagabond Sherif.' But to see that was nothing. When he got his idea he had to drive it into reluctant minds, through the bulwarks of fear, of selfishness. He drove it in at last. And that was nothing. He had to devise the means. He devised them—an audacious plan; and his task was only half done. He had to inspire with his own confidence a lot of people who had hidden and absurd reasons to hang back; he had to conciliate imbecile jealousies, and argue away all sorts of senseless mistrusts. Without the weight of Doramin's authority, and his son's fiery enthusiasm, he would have failed. Dain Waris, the distinguished youth, was the first to believe in him; theirs was one of these strange, profound, rare friendships between brown and white, in which the very differ-

ence of race seems to draw two human beings closer by some mystic element of sympathy. Of Dain Waris, his own people said with pride that he knew how to fight like a white man. This was true; he had that sort of courage—the courage in the open, I may say, —but he had also a European mind. You meet them sometimes like that, and are surprised to discover unexpectedly a familiar turn of thought, an unobscured vision, a tenacity of purpose, a touch of altruism. Of small stature, but admirably well proportioned, Dain Waris had a proud carriage, a polished, easy bearing, a temperament like a clear flame. His dusky face, with big black eyes, was in action expressive, and in repose thoughtful. He was of a silent disposition; a firm glance, an ironic smile, a courteous deliberation of manner seemed to hint at great reserves of intelligence and power. Such beings open to the Western eye, so often concerned with mere surfaces, the hidden possibilities of races and lands over which hangs the mystery of unrecorded ages. He not only trusted Jim, he understood him, I firmly believe. I speak of him because he had captivated me. His—if I may say so—his caustic placidity, and, at the same time, his intelligent sympathy with Jim's aspirations, appealed to me. I seemed to behold the very origin of friendship. If Jim took the lead, the other had captivated his leader. In fact, Jim the leader was a captive in every sense. The land, the people, the friendship, the love, were like the jealous guardians of his body. Every day added a link to the fetters of that strange freedom. I felt convinced of it, as from day to day I learned more of the story.

"The story! Haven't I heard the story? I've heard it on the march, in camp (he made me scour the country after invisible game); I've listened to a good part of it on one of the twin-summits, after climbing the last hundred feet or so on my hands and knees. Our escort (we had volunteer followers from village to village) had camped meantime on a bit of level ground half-way up the slope, and in the still breathless evening the smell of wood-smoke reached our nostrils from below with the penetrating delicacy of some choice scent. Voices also ascended, wonderful in their distinct and immaterial clearness. Jim sat on the trunk of a felled tree, and pulling out his pipe began to smoke. A new growth of grass and bushes was springing up; there were traces of an earthwork under a mass of thorny twigs. 'It all started from here,' he said, after a long and meditative silence. On the other hill, two hundred yards across a sombre precipice, I saw a line of high blackened stakes, showing here and there ruinously—the remnants of Sherif Ali's impregnable camp.

"But it had been taken though. That had been his idea. He had mounted Doramin's old ordnance on the top of that hill; two rusty iron 7-pounders, a lot of small brass cannon—currency cannon. But

if the brass guns represent wealth, they can also, when crammed recklessly to the muzzle, send a solid shot to some little distance. The thing was to get them up there. He showed me where he had fastened the cables, explained how he had improvised a rude capstan out of a hollowed log turning upon a pointed stake, indicated with the bowl of his pipe the outline of the earthwork. The last hundred feet of the ascent had been the most difficult. He had made himself responsible for success on his own head. He had induced the war party to work hard all night. Big fires lighted at intervals blazed all down the slope, 'but up here,' he explained, 'the hoisting gang had to fly around in the dark.' From the top he saw men moving on the hillside like ants at work. He himself on that night had kept on rushing down and climbing up like a squirrel, directing, encouraging, watching all along the line. Old Doramin had himself carried up the hill in his armchair. They put him down on the level place upon the slope, and he sat there in the light of one of the big fires—'amazing old chap—real old chieftain,' said Jim, 'with his little fierce eyes—a pair of immense flintlock pistols on his knees. Magnificent things, ebony, silver-mounted, with beautiful locks and a calibre like an old blunderbuss. A present from Stein, it seems—in exchange for that ring, you know. Used to belong to good old M'Neil. God only knows how *he* came by them. There he sat, moving neither hand nor foot, a flame of dry brushwood behind him, and lots of people rushing about, shouting and pulling round him—the most solemn, imposing old chap you can imagine. *He* wouldn't have had much chance if Sherif Ali had let his infernal crew loose at us and stampeded my lot. Eh? Anyhow, he had come up there to die if anything went wrong. No mistake! Jove! It thrilled me to see him there—like a rock. But the Sherif must have thought us mad, and never troubled to come and see how we got on. Nobody believed it could be done. Why! I think the very chaps who pulled and shoved and sweated over it did not believe it could be done! Upon my word I don't think they did. . . .'

"He stood erect, the smouldering brier-wood in his clutch, with a smile on his lips and a sparkle in his boyish eyes. I sat on the stump of a tree at his feet, and below us stretched the land, the great expanse of the forests, sombre under the sunshine, rolling like a sea, with glints of winding rivers, the grey spots of villages, and here and there a clearing, like an islet of light amongst the dark waves of continuous tree-tops. A brooding gloom lay over this vast and monotonous landscape; the light fell on it as if into an abyss. The land devoured the sunshine; only far off, along the coast, the empty ocean, smooth and polished within the faint haze, seemed to rise up to the sky in a wall of steel.

"And there I was with him, high in the sunshine on the top of that historic hill of his. He dominated the forest, the secular gloom, the old mankind. He was like a figure set up on a pedestal, to represent in his persistent youth the power, and perhaps the virtues, of races that never grow old, that have emerged from the gloom. I don't know why he should always have appeared to me symbolic. Perhaps this is the real cause of my interest in his fate. I don't know whether it was exactly fair to him to remember the incident which had given a new direction to his life, but at that very moment I remembered very distinctly. It was like a shadow in the light."

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Already the legend had gifted him with supernatural powers. Yes, it was said, there had been many ropes cunningly disposed, and a strange contrivance that turned by the efforts of many men, and each gun went up tearing slowly through the bushes, like a wild pig rooting its way in the undergrowth, but, . . . and the wisest shook their heads. There was something occult in all this, no doubt; for what is the strength of ropes and of men's arms? There is a rebellious soul in things which must be overcome by powerful charms and incantations. Thus old Sura—a very respectable householder of Patusan—with whom I had a quiet chat one evening. However, Sura was a professional sorcerer also, who attended all the rice sowings and reapings for miles around for the purpose of subduing the stubborn soul of things. This occupation he seemed to think a most arduous one, and perhaps the souls of things are more stubborn than the souls of men. As to the simple folk of outlying villages, they believed and said (as the most natural thing in the world) that Jim had carried the guns up the hill on his back—two at a time.

"This would make Jim stamp his foot in vexation and exclaim with an exasperated little laugh, 'What can you do with such silly beggars? They will sit up half the night talking bally rot, and the greater the lie the more they seem to like it.' You could trace the subtle influence of his surroundings in this irritation. It was part of his captivity. The earnestness of his denials was amusing, and at last I said, 'My dear fellow, you don't suppose *I* believe this.' He looked at me quite startled. 'Well, no! I suppose not,' he said, and burst into a Homeric peal of laughter. 'Well, anyhow the guns were there, and went off all together at sunrise. Jove! You should have seen the splinters fly,' he cried. By his side Dain Waris, listening with a quiet smile, dropped his eyelids and shuffled his feet a little. It appears that the success in mounting the guns had given Jim's people such a feeling of confidence that

he ventured to leave the battery under charge of two elderly Bugis who had seen some fighting in their day, and went to join Dain Waris and the storming-party who were concealed in the ravine. In the small hours they began creeping up, and when two-thirds of the way up, lay in the wet grass waiting for the appearance of the sun, which was the agreed signal. He told me with what impatient anguishing emotion he watched the swift coming of the dawn; how, heated with the work and the climbing, he felt the cold dew chilling his very bones; how afraid he was he would begin to shiver and shake like a leaf before the time came for the advance. 'It was the slowest half-hour in my life,' he declared. Gradually the silent stockade came out on the sky above him. Men scattered all down the slope were crouching amongst the dark stones and dripping bushes. Dain Waris was lying flattened by his side. 'We looked at each other,' Jim said, resting a gentle hand on his friend's shoulder. 'He smiled at me as cheery as you please, and I dared not stir my lips for fear I would break out into a shivering fit. 'Pon my word, it's true! I had been streaming with perspiration when we took cover—so you may imagine . . .' He declared, and I believe him, that he had no fears as to the result. He was only anxious as to his ability to repress these shivers. He didn't bother about the result. He was bound to get to the top of that hill and stay there, whatever might happen. There could be no going back for him. Those people had trusted him implicitly. Him alone! His bare word. . . .

"I remember how, at this point, he paused with his eyes fixed upon me. 'As far as he knew, they never had an occasion to regret it yet,' he said. 'Never. He hoped to God they never would. Meantime—worse luck!—they had got into the habit of taking his word for anything and everything. I could have no idea! Why? Only the other day an old fool he had never seen in his life came from some village miles away to find out if he should divorce his wife. Fact. Solemn word. That's the sort of thing . . . He wouldn't have believed it. Would I? Squatted on the verandah chewing betel-nut, sighing and spitting all over the place for more than an hour, and as glum as an undertaker before he came out with that dashed conundrum. That's the kind of thing that isn't so funny as it looks. What was a fellow to say?—Good wife?—Yes. Good wife—old though; started a confounded long story about some brass pots. Been living together for fifteen years—twenty years—could not tell. A long, long time. Good wife. Beat her a little—not much—just a little, when she was young. Had to—for the sake of his honour. Suddenly in her old age she goes and lends three brass pots to her sister's son's wife, and begins to abuse him every day in a loud voice. His enemies jeered at him; his

face was utterly blackened. Pots totally lost. Awfully cut up about it. Impossible to fathom a story like that; told him to go home, and promised to come along myself and settle it all. It's all very well to grin, but it was the dashedest nuisance! A day's journey through the forest, another day lost in coaxing a lot of silly villagers to get at the rights of the affair. There was the making of a sanguinary shindy in the thing. Every bally idiot took sides with one family or the other, and one-half of the village was ready to go for the other half with anything that came handy. Honour bright! No joke! . . . Instead of attending to their bally crops. Got him the infernal pots back of course — and pacified all hands. No trouble to settle it. Of course not. Could settle the deadliest quarrel in the country by crooking his little finger. The trouble was to get at the truth of anything. Was not sure to this day whether he had been fair to all parties. It worried him. And the talk! Jove! There didn't seem to be any head or tail to it. Rather storm a twenty-foot-high old stockade any day. Much! Child's play to that other job. Wouldn't take so long either. Well, yes; a funny set out, upon the whole—the fool looked old enough to be his grandfather. But from another point of view it was no joke. His word decided everything—ever since the smashing of Sherif Ali. An awful responsibility,' he repeated. 'No, really—joking apart, had it been three lives instead of three rotten brass pots it would have been the same. . . .'

"Thus he illustrated the moral effect of his victory in war. It was in truth immense. It had led him from strife to peace, and through death into the innermost life of the people; but the gloom of the land spread out under the sunshine preserved its appearance of inscrutable, of secular repose. The sound of his fresh young voice (it's extraordinary how very few signs of wear he showed) floated lightly, and passed away over the unchanged face of the forests like the sound of the big guns on that cold dewy morning when he had no other concern on earth but the proper control of the chills in his body. With the first slant of sun-rays along these immovable tree-tops the summit of one hill wreathed itself, with heavy reports, in white clouds of smoke, and the other burst into an amazing noise of yells, war-cries, shouts of anger, of surprise, of dismay. Jim and Dain Waris were the first to lay their hands on the stakes. The popular story has it that Jim with a touch of one finger had thrown down the gate. He was, of course, anxious to disclaim this achievement. The whole stockade—he would insist on explaining to you—was a poor affair (Sherif Ali trusted mainly to the inaccessible position); and, anyway, the thing had been already knocked to pieces and only hung together by a miracle. He put his shoulder to it like a little fool

and went in head over heels. Jove! If it hadn't been for Dain Waris, a pock-marked tattooed vagabond would have pinned him with his spear to a baulk of timber like one of Stein's beetles. The third man in, it seems, was Tamb' Itam, Jim's own servant. This was a Malay from the north, a stranger who had wandered into Patusan, and had been forcibly detained by Rajah Allong as paddler of one of the state boats. He had made a bolt of it at the first opportunity, and finding a precarious refuge (but very little to eat) amongst the Bugis settlers, had attached himself to Jim's person. His complexion was very dark, his face flat, his eyes prominent and injected with bile. There was something excessive, almost fanatical, in his devotion to his 'white lord.' He hovered silently round Jim like a morose shadow. On state occasions he would tread on his master's heels, one hand on the haft of his kris, keeping the common people at a distance by his truculent brooding glances. Jim had made him the headman of his establishment, and all Patusan respected and courted him as a person of much influence. At the taking of the stockade he had distinguished himself greatly by the methodical ferocity of his fighting. The storming-party had come on so quick—Jim said—that notwithstanding the panic of the garrison, there was a 'hot five minutes hand-to-hand inside that stockade, till some bally ass set fire to the shelters of boughs and dry grass, and we all had to clear out for dear life.'

"The rout, it seems, was complete. Doramin waiting immovably in his chair on the hillside, with the smoke of the guns spreading slowly above his big head, received the news with a deep grunt. When informed that his son was safe and leading the pursuit he, without another sound, made a mighty effort to rise; his attendants hurried to his help, and, held up reverently, he shuffled with great dignity into a bit of shade, where he laid himself down to sleep covered entirely with a piece of white sheeting. In Patusan the excitement was intense. Jim told me that from the hill, turning his back on the stockade with its embers, black ashes, and half-consumed corpses, he could see time after time the open spaces between the houses on both sides of the stream fill suddenly with a seething rush of people and get empty in a moment. His ears caught feebly from below the tremendous din of gongs and drums; the wild shouts of the crowd reached him in bursts of faint roaring. A lot of streamers made a flutter as of little white, red, yellow birds amongst the brown ridges of roofs. 'You must have enjoyed it,' I murmured, feeling the stir of sympathetic emotion.

"'It was . . . it was immense! Immense!' he cried aloud, flinging his arms open. The sudden movement startled me as though I had seen him bare the secrets of his breast to the sunshine, to the brooding forests, to the steely sea. Below

us the town reposed in easy curves upon the banks of a stream whose current seemed to sleep. 'Immense!' he repeated for a third time, speaking in a whisper, for himself alone.

"Immense! No doubt it was immense; the seal of success upon his words, the conquered ground for the soles of his feet, the blind trust of men, the belief in himself snatched from the fire, the solitude of his achievement. All this, as I've warned you, gets dwarfed in the telling. I can't with mere words convey to you the impression of his total and utter isolation. I know, of course, he was in every sense alone of his kind there, but the unsuspected qualities of his nature had brought him in such close touch with his surroundings that this isolation seemed only the effect of his power. His loneliness added to his stature. There was nothing within sight to compare him with, as though he had been one of these exceptional men who can be only measured by the greatness of their fame; and his fame, remember, was the greatest thing around for many a day's journey. You would have to paddle, pole, or track a long weary way through the jungle before you passed beyond the reach of its voice. Its voice was not the trumpeting of the disreputable goddess we all know, not blatant, not brazen. It took its tone from the stillness and gloom of the land without a past, where his word was the one truth of every passing day. It shared something of the nature of that silence through which it accompanied you into unexplored depths, heard continuously by your side, penetrating, far-reaching—tinged with wonder and mystery on the lips of whispering men."

(To be continued.)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION — THE TASTE OF ARRANGEMENT — VULGARITY THE PRIVILEGE OF THE MODERNS — HANDICRAFT AND WAR — THE EXHIBITION AN EXCUSE FOR POLITICAL ACRIMONY — NATIONALISTS AND REPUBLICANS — THE SCHEMES OF GENERAL MERCIER — THE PARISIAN LOVE OF KINGS — THE *CLOU* OF THE EXHIBITION.

A YOUNG poet, burning with enthusiasm and new ideas, once complained that he had not yet found a means of expression. "Je cherche une formule," said he, and if only his search had not been vain, he might have given a fresh shape to an ancient truth. And as we looked for the first time upon the French Exhibition, we too confessed that we lacked a formula, which might help us to describe so vast an assemblage of facts. There, within a single enclosure, which seems to cover half a town, are gathered together the spoils of the whole world. A Boer farm jostles the temple of a Cambodian god, an English manor-house frowns coldly down upon an imitation of Milan Cathedral; yet out of these diverse elements there emerges a sort of harmony, and although the parts quarrel bitterly enough in the broad light of day, it is still possible to view them as parts of a single whole, to find, in brief, such a formula as may express the biggest fair the world has ever seen.

The formula, then, which expresses the effect is taste,—taste, above all, of arrangement. The materials, diverse and even clumsy as they seem in detail, are so cunningly set as to give an impression of a reasoned and absolute design. And this design is the fruit of France's logical taste and exquisite fancy. To enclose such a space as is measured from the Trocadero to the Champ de Mars, or from the Champs Elysées to the Invalides, is at first sight a merely grandiose enterprise. But the French genius has evolved from this grandiose enterprise a delicate beauty, which delights even more than it amazes. The river is, so to say, the centre of the fair; and the new bridge, dedicated to Alexander III., is a noble pathway, leading from the triumphs of French art to the Street of all the Nations. So simple and just is the design that it would have escaped any but a French brain, and while other countries must assume the blame attaching to their bizarre and fanciful imaginations, the credit of perfect order belongs to France alone.

Enter by the gate of the Champs Elysées, and you will see with how keen a sense of the picturesque the endless buildings have been placed. The vista is closed by the Palais des Invalides, a piece of old France reverently included in the new design. Against the white

wings which enclose it, its aspect, perhaps, is dingier than it should be; but there it is to remind the world that the France of the Monarchy is still the France that we know to-day, and to suggest in some vague fashion that ancient and modern are not irreconcilable. Moreover, though the fatal ugliness of the Trocadero can know no palliation, though the buildings which surround it are awkward enough to be parts of an iron foundry, it needs only nightfall to convert the scene into a fantasy of the 'Arabian Nights.' There in the distance is the Château d'Eau, brilliant with its many-twinkling fountains, and over all strides the Eiffel Tower, its heavy iron turned to lace in the gloom, and its outline touched as it were by a phosphorescent hand.

But the two palaces, great and small, need not fear the light of day. None but French architects could have built them, and it is to the severe respect for tradition that they owe their beauty. Designed for the proper display of masterpieces, they are perfectly adapted to this purpose, and they will remain to do honour to Paris long after the Exhibition closes its doors. The Little Palace, especially, is a marvel of elegance, and, indeed, it should be, for it holds within the elegant treasures of France. No more beautiful collection has ever been made, and within these spacious rooms, splendid with tapestry and stately with armoured figures, may be studied the handicrafts of France. Her furniture, her jewels, all the ornaments of her cathedrals, are there gathered and displayed, and it is evident that from Merovingian times to the Empire France was the home of magnificence and dainty design. There on the wall hang the rich tapestries of Angers; there is a gold cup, studded with jewels, which carries you back to the eighth century—barbarous perhaps, yet noble in its savagery. And so the Gothic age ascends to the Renaissance, and presently Louis XIV. yields to the simplicity of his successors, until the Directory gives way to the heavy grandeur of the Empire. But so far each style has its own propriety, its own splendeur.

As we descend to our own time there is another tale to tell, and we are forced to ask, Is vulgarity the privilege of the moderns? Or is it the universal habit of mankind to shudder at the contemporary taste? Will the centuries that are yet to come admire the cheap furniture and common inventions of to-day? We cannot think it, and the Exhibition is (from one point of view) of dismal augury. Of course, all ages have listened to the groans of conservatives, and have been half persuaded to believe that they marked the final decadence. The old knights who had served under Louis XIII. shuddered, no doubt, at the new-fangled magnificence which distinguished the Court of the Grand Monarch. Doubtless, too, the style of Louis XVI.'s time seemed austere to those who remembered the twisted elaboration of an earlier taste.

And how should the stately mahogany and the strange emblems of the Empire appeal to the stern partisans of the *Ancien Régime?* These changes of style corresponded to a change of feeling, and were each and all inspired by sincerity. They were also marked by a proper growth and a logical development. In the modern style there is no growth, there is no character. Enter what pavilion you will—be it Mexico or Italy, Austria or Belgium—and you will encounter the same enormity. You cannot call the prevailing style French, nor even European; to name it after Felix Faure or Loubet would be an affront to those respectable Presidents. The style is of no place, of no time—it is merely modern. Nor is its ugliness its sole fault, though that should be sufficient to condemn it. Its lack of sincerity is a more heinous sin, because that sin not only ruins the present but makes the future appear hopeless. The prevailing fashion of ornament, in fact, belongs to nobody and corresponds to nothing. The man (or the people) who adopts it did not find it out; nor was it chosen from the ragbag of the past because it satisfied a taste or chimed with an idea. Though it comes from the past, it is none the less an outrage upon tradition, because, old as it is, it jolts back to a purely arbitrary point of view. In the Little Palace no vulgarity distresses our eye. But we cannot believe that oceans of years will purge the stain of an indelible vulgarity from the cosmopolitan art of the shops.

The French taste of arrangement, then, is pure as of yore. The architects of France have not forgotten the value of space, the capital importance of balance and variety. So far as the ground-plan is concerned, nothing has been left to chance. The walks and gardens are designed with an exquisite tact. The very palings which encircle the Exhibition are proof enough of thought and intelligence. And so long as the buildings are a faithful echo, they commend our admiration. Their fairy whiteness, too, is the best background for such ornament as marble and tapestry afford. But when once a modern fantasy is let loose, disaster is immediate. The great gate in the Place de la Concorde, upon which so much praise is lavished, is a frank and blatant horror. An experiment in the use of iron, it might have been both curious and interesting, but no material—not even the butter of the famous American statue—can excuse a palpable eyesore, and the flattened dome and the meaningless circles of this monstrous gate have no excuse save youth. Nor is the modern lady of Paris, who seems to step down from its top with opera-cloak on shoulder, one whit better than the parti-coloured gate. Yet it was a right idea, and perhaps it only failed because the sculptor, with no model before him, was forced to rely upon a treacherous fancy.

As with handicrafts and architecture, so with the pic-

tures. The canvases of the last ten years, accomplished as some of them are, still look as crude and brutal as they did in their respective Salons. The canvases of the last hundred years —for it is into "decennal" and "centennal" that the galleries of French painting are divided —have already the complexion of old masters. Manet, once irreconcilable, is to-day enveloped in an atmosphere of distinction. The public of 1863 laughed at his "Déjeuner sur l'herbe"; the public of to-day, which is possibly less intelligent, smiles in approbation. What is it that is so easily accomplished by time? Maybe the heresy of to-day becomes the gospel of to-morrow; maybe the creed which half-a-dozen intrepid spirits dare to formulate is generally accepted after a first struggle. But at any rate it is consoling to reflect that the great man is ahead of his age, and that he can comfortably wait for the laggards to catch him up.

Nor is Manet the only painter who has won the battle with no other arms than the passing years. MM. Sisley and Pissaro, they too were flouted, yet eccentricity has vanished from their canvases, and again we ask, Will another thirty years bring dignity to the experiments of to-day? Meanwhile we may admire in all gratitude of heart the pictures which reveal the talent of Daumier the painter; we may wonder at the superb busts of Hondon, and delight once more in the art of the Romantiques. And if we weary of these treasures, there, on the one hand, is the priceless collection of the Mikado, there, on the other, the superb tapestries of Spain.

So it is that France has done her utmost to introduce in a spirit of unity all the nations of the earth, and she has done it with an exquisite taste and tact which belong to her alone. Yet, without being churlish, one may remember that the President and his Ministers pitched the key of enthusiasm a little too high. The Exhibition, we were told, was to revive our dying civilisation, to relight the torch of art, and to give peace to all men. Of course it will do none of these things, which, indeed, are beyond the reach of human enterprise. But its achievement, if less humble, is none the less praiseworthy. It has given an example to the architects of the world, it has displayed its ancient treasures, which should be at once a model and an inspiration; it has marked the point of inefficiency to which modern handicrafts have attained; and it has proved that human ingenuity, which once was busied in the making of a chair, the modelling of a clock, or the enamelling of a snuff-box, is now exhausted in vast machines and in the manufacture of warlike implements. Schneider's great gun seems to threaten the Exhibition, and it is perhaps in the corner devoted to the army that we should seek an explanation of the prevailing vulgarity. So long as cannons engross the ingenuity of man-

kind, we must be content with a commercial art and with houses of hideous mien. The warfare of to-day is no aristocratic pastime; long ago it was lifted from the realm of sport into the realm of science; and so keen is the rivalry of destruction that guns and explosives are enough to engross the energy of a whole people. When the lull comes, if ever it comes, then maybe the arts of peace will revive; but in the meantime the Paris Exhibition has taught us that the triumph of the modern world is purely mechanical. We can threaten our enemies more efficiently, we can kill space and time with greater ease, an automobile can speed us from one end of a country to another more rapidly than the old stage-coach. For these privileges we must pay the penalty, and if our own generation produce little that is beautiful, we may solace ourselves with the creations of the past.

But while her President spoke with quaking voice concerning the mission of peace, the politicians of France still look upon the Exhibition as an opportunity for violent discussion and bitter acrimony. The Government declares that the present and future of its country depends upon the success of a commercial enterprise; the Nationalists reproach the other side with subordinating the honour of France to a fancy fair, and confess that nothing would please them better than the hopeless failure of the Exhibition. From one point of view the Nationalists are right. It is inconvenient, and even dangerous, for a people to put all its eggs in one basket. Yet no sooner was the Exhibition resolved upon than France was pledged to the project, and for twelve years France has been loyal to the trust. Whatever has happened in the meanwhile has been sternly considered with an eye fixed upon the gate-money which during the summer of 1900 should swell the coffers of France. The spirit of restlessness which keeps our neighbours always in love with war or revolution has been partially checked, and, as we have said, the Nationalists may complain with a certain justice that of late years political agitation has enjoyed but half a chance. Who knows that but for the Exhibition the stain of Fashoda would not have been wiped out? Who dare assert that but for the same Exhibition M. Déroulède would not be installed at the Elysée? So they grumble, do the Nationalists, and pray for ruin, disorder, and collapse, knowing well that the failure of the Exhibition would aid the schemes of General Mercier as well as a European war.

The Government is more wisely inspired. At all hazards it is determined upon peace, and peace will be preserved—until the last visitor has passed through the turnstile. M. Waldeck-Rousseau, indeed, is prepared to sacrifice much that he holds dear for the practical triumph of the national project. He will support an amnesty, and thus deprive MM. Zola

and Piquart of their just redress; he will close any incident which is likely to arouse a public demonstration; and from his point of view the situation may demand the abrogation of justice. At any rate, it looks as though the Government will win. The Exhibition is a superb success; half a million visitors have been registered in a single day; and for a while the god of prosperity is smiling upon Paris. Why, then, need the citizens complain that their hold upon European politics is relaxing? France has so much wealth within her own borders that she has no need of a spirited policy without, and MM. Loubet and Millerand are the truest patriots of them all.

But, curiously enough, excitement is as necessary to France as wealth itself, and the wiseacres go about the streets wagging their heads and asking with an air of profound mystery what will happen in the autumn. When the Exhibition has closed its doors — what then? With an inborn hankering after some new thing, they think that they will never be content to return to the quiet routine of former years, and they grimly prophesy war with England. That war, we believe, will never take place; but it is quite possible that some such mischievous politicians as General Mercier will do their best to contrive a sensation. There will doubtless be packed within the walls of Paris many thousands of workmen whose job is finished, and who will be ready for a desperate enterprise. Moreover, it is evident that General Mercier is still dreaming of a dictatorship, since only the other day he declared that force is not yet necessary, implying thereby that when the proper moment arrives, force will be there to further his designs. But his designs are more likely to persuade him to assault the palace of his own President than to march upon London. The Channel is a desperate obstacle, and we shall never see Major Marchand climb the difficult ascent of Ludgate Hill. On the other hand, an army might easily overcome the guard of the Elysée, and once M. Loubet was ousted from his throne, a genuine measure of Republican freedom might be thrust upon an unwilling people by MM. Rochefort and Drumont. It is an unpleasant prospect, which makes us look to the autumn with a nervous curiosity.

Meanwhile Paris enjoys herself, and those who are old enough to remember the glorious days of the Second Empire ask themselves why the gravity of the third Republic should not be eclipsed. Above all, the Parisians are indulging their legitimate passion for kings. Like all democrats, they contemplate a crowned head with frank enthusiasm. The heads which have worn the crown of France have lain uneasy for a century. Louis XVI. lost his on the scaffold; Louis XVIII. ran to and fro so often that he was half a stranger to his throne; while Charles X. and Louis Philippe both died in miserable exile. But, as has been said a dozen times, "Gal-

lus Gallo Lupus," and the French, who have detested their own kings, adore the kings of others. Not only have they purchased a villa for the reception of monarchs, but they are prepared to pay the sincerest homage to any that will come. So far only one has accepted their hospitality, and the King of Sweden and Norway is not likely to forget his visit. Nobody has ever had a more brilliant press, save only the Czar, the *grand ami* of France. Wherever the grandson of Bernadotte appeared he was greeted with applause; his lightest words were printed in the newspapers, and henceforth he will remain to the Parisians a familiar figure. Nor is this enthusiasm confined to Paris. Contrexville is bowing the knee to the Shah of Persia, for the dust of whose chariots the citizens watched the horizon for many a day. The reporters chronicle his movements with a naïveté that is charming. If he walks, they are surprised that his imperial frame should be supported upon two legs; if he speaks, they are surprised that his voice sounds not unlike the voice of a man. And what they will say of the King of Portugal, of the Khedive, and, lastly, of the Emperor of all the Russias, we dare not foretell. We only hope that they will not have used their vocabulary up before his arrival.

In this worship of lions, in this adulation of monarchs not their own, there is, of course, an element of pathos. But the sentiment cannot be dismissed as the mere confusion of the unknown with the magnificent. No doubt the sturdy republican does regret that his constitution provides him with an unemotional figurehead. Yet he might easily translate his regret into disdain, and that the average Frenchman never does. Deep down in the heart of France is the sentiment and the pride of hospitality. No country in the world is so profoundly, so justly, satisfied with its power of entertainment. Even without the Exhibition, there is more in Paris to tempt the traveller than in any other city of the world; and no vanity can persuade Englishman or German not to delight in the churches, the pictures, the gardens, and the theatres of Paris. Moreover, when Madame Metternich described the French capital as the *cabaret* of Europe, she hid a pretty compliment in a word of contempt. There is no disgrace in well-cooked food, and the Parisian restaurants are not a superstition but an admirable reality. Paris, then, knows her virtues better than we do—she has never lacked consciousness of self, and she takes a very proper delight in their display. If she can charm the millionaire, so much the better for her pocket. But it is evidently far more amusing to capture the approval of a king.

And, republican though she be, France has still preserved her ancient love of splendour. Not only does she take pleasure in pageants, she understands the art of pageantry better than any other nation. She can stage-manage a function or a procession as easily as she

can stage-manage her admirable theatre. She is mistress of the graces, as of the ornaments which lend a magnificence to life. All that she needs is an excuse, and this excuse is given her by the kings to whom for this year she prepares a welcome. Nor is this enthusiasm without its moral. A people which uncovers in the presence of any king, which follows him with a frank admiration, is surely monarchical at heart. And if only France could find a monarch worthy her tradition and her eager loyalty, might she not enjoy a greater happiness? But, alas! were the king her own, she would tire of him in a week. The fickleness of Paris makes her despair of stable government. A private citizen may be reputed to enjoy all the virtues. Put him in the Ministry, and he becomes the pack-horse of all the vices. The scurrility of the Chamber, the infamy of the press, correspond to no political principle; they merely mirror a deep-rooted hate of all authority. If France were governed by another king, the scaffold or exile would probably be his untoward fate. Meanwhile she is anxious to contemplate and to flatter the kings of others. It is a pretty paradox, and its explanation might baffle the ingenuity of all the psychologists.

Yet, despite the hospitality of France, the Nationalists are as angrily opposed to strangers as the Chinese. "La France aux Français!" is their cry; and though there is no chance that France will belong to any one else, they reiterate it with a ceaseless energy. The mere idea that foreigners will visit the Exhibition and fill the pockets of Paris is loathsome to the sturdy Nationalists, and indeed on this score they have little to complain of. The Exhibition is, before all, a success for France. On all hands you hear the French language, and you might easily believe it a national *fête*. The English, not unnaturally, have kept away, and make but a poor display among the exhibitors. But the French themselves profess the keenest and most practical interest in their enterprise. They visit the fair in thousands, they picnic in the grounds, until it seems as though the whole summer would be an unbroken 14th of July. And, above all, they hustle their wits to discover what is the *clou* of the Exhibition.

What, then, is the *clou*, which is plainly necessary to the success of every project? The last Exhibition left us in no doubt —there was the Eiffel Tower, with the amazement not only of size but of novelty. Yet the Eiffel Tower is familiar by this, and we must look about for a fresher curiosity. Many sensations have been suggested— the vast globe, the telescope, the house that stands upon its head. But the globe and telescope are too serious, the topsy-turvy house is too fantastic to attract. Then again there is Old Paris, which might be expected to rejoice those who are touched by the Romantic Revival, but Old Paris is too obviously arranged, and M.

Coquelin, maybe, has spoiled the taste for the Tour de Nesle. The *clou*, then, is hard to find, and the difficulty of the search is a high compliment to the interest of the Exhibition. Where there is so much to engage our curiosity, why should we expect to discover one object which compels the universal attention ? And yet there is a *clou*, overlooked perhaps, because it is in the sight of all.

When the Exhibition has closed its doors, it is the *trottoir roulant* which will be the liveliest memory. For this admirable invention has never ceased to amuse the crowd. If it be the last word of modern ingenuity, the idea of its construction is as old as Rabelais. "We sail'd before the wind," says the creator of Pantagruel, "between a pair of crosses, and in two days made the island of Odes; at which place we saw a very strange thing. The ways there are animals; so true is Aristotle's saying, that all self-moving things are animals. Now the Ways walk there; Ergo, they are then animals. . . . I perceived that the travellers and inhabitants of that country ask'd whither does this way go? . . . Some observed, Between Midi and Fensolles, to the Parish Church, to the River, and so forth. Being thus in their right way, they used to reach their journey's end without any further trouble, just like those who go by water from Lyons to Avignon or Arles." Where could you find a better description of the *trottoir roulant?* It is the way that moves and is the animal; the men and women may (if they choose) stand still, until they reach their destination. And the Parisians, ever avid of some new thing, gaze on the rolling roadway with untiring rapture. Nor is their curiosity misplaced. Very strange is it to be carried beneath trees, and past houses, over streets, and along gardens, without expending any energy of your own. Yet so manifestly is man a walking animal that he can hardly stand still though the roadway carries him. He must still be walking, walking to increase the speed of his journey: it is only the idle and contented who can endure to lean upon the railing and be happy. However, here is a new field of curiosity and exercise. To get on and off a path, which never stops, is an enterprise of some difficulty, and one which tempts all men to experiment. Whether so fine a project will be introduced into our cities we know not; but we know that the real amusement of the Exhibition is the moving path, which, according to Aristotle, must be an animal. Then for the more gravely disposed there remain the two exquisite palaces of art, and for all there glitters the largest *café concert* (for such in one aspect is the Exhibition) which the world has ever seen.

UNTIL THE DAY DAWN.

SILENCE and Night were alone in the forest; afar was the sound of the sea,
That moaned on its shores with a presage low of the storm about to be:
The dark clouds drooped like banners of death, and the tops of the tall trees bowed;
For a wind came forth, and after the wind a Voice, from the midst of the cloud.
And the stars went out, and the forest trembled, knowing the Voice of God;
And He cried:
"Is this well that thou doest, O Man? Did I make thee a shedder of blood?
I gave thee the Earth and the fruits thereof, the sun and the wind and the rain;
Child and wife to thy bosom: have these My gifts been given in vain?
I gave thee the breath and the beauty of dawn, the service and splendour of day;
The seed and the sap of thy thought, and the skill of thy fashioning hands that obey:
I gave thee the strength of the morning, and wrought thee the curtains of darkness deep
To fold over labour and patience and pleasure the sweetness and solace of sleep.
But My dawns are red with the shame of the flame that thy passions have kindled and fed,
And My Earth cries aloud unto Me from her hills and her plains with their burden of dead.
Lo, where is the joy of the harvest? My seasons have nourished the growth of the grain,
Yet the garners are empty. But Death has garnered his harvest of terror and pain.
For the songs of thy labour are turned into thunder and clamour and clash of the fight;
Thou takest no joy from the glory of day, no enfolding of peace from the night:

Thy wife and the child that I gave thee are heavy with mourning
and wasted with tears,
And the power and strength of thy manhood is lavished and lost
at the crown of thy years.
Art thou weary of light and of gladness? Desirest thou blood-
shed and darkness of death?
Arise now and answer, O Man whom I made in My likeness and
filled with My breath."

Then the night gathered back into silence. But, fainting, there
passed on the wind as it went
An infinite murmur of anguish and pain, irretrievable loss and
lament;
Till a curse clove it sharply asunder and flung up a challenge of
wrath fierce and bold:—
"Judge Thou! Is it *we* who have pandered to power? Is it *we*
who have grasped after gold?
As sheep we were driven to slaughter, our eyes have been dazzled
and blinded with lies:
Judge Thou; are we guilty, that knew not? The curse be on
those who have played for the prize.
Judge Thou!"

The storm burst on the forest; the wild-beating
fury and blast of the rain,
The roar of the wind in the trees, were as voices of Earth in her
passion and pain;
The quick, jaggèd spear of the lightning flashed forth from the
terror and gloom of the sky,
And the thunder rolled far to the end of the heavens its sullen
and angry reply.

Then, slowly, the night gathered silence again, with sighs for
delight of release;
The stars in their places shone forth, and the breath of the wind
was as healing and peace:
And there rose in the darkness a song,—on the wings of the
wind it swept loftily by,—
While the trees waved as banners of triumph before the un-
clouded clear arch of the sky.

"Thou gavest us life, and we loved it; yet went with the gift of our life in our hand;
And our blood has baptised to a life that is newer and stronger the length of the land.
We gave it for Freedom, and freely; nor feared we the sure shaft of death when it came;
We were shedders of blood, we were givers of blood: we are sharers of glory—not shame.
Oh, sweet were the dawn and the day! and the strength of our manhood was joyous as wine;
And the light of the eyes that we loved was more lovely when tears made their tenderness shine:
But the voice that had called us was stronger than these,—perchance though we knew not its name;—
But we knew there were those that must yield up their lives; and we counted it glory—not shame!"

Then the silence sank down like a dove in the heart of the forest, that waited and kept
The long, solemn watches of night.
And at last came an answer:
"The eyes that have wept
Shall be lightened, the bruised shall be healed, and the people shall lift up their faces again,
And the songs of their love and their labour be heard; and the Earth shall be cleansed from her slain.
The word of My promise is sure; I have spoken; I change not, nor fail, nor forget:
For the thunders of War SHALL be hushed, and the Earth shall learn Peace. But the time is not yet."

So the Night, with the voice of its storm, and the clouds and the darkness passed slowly away;
And the Dawn softly stirred in the Eat, and came forth in the glow of her glorious array.
And the heart of the world, that had slept, woke and beat; and God blessed it, and gave a New Day.

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.

SOME EVENTS AND AN ARMISTICE.

PERHAPS one of the most curious incidents of that curious fourteen days' fighting, which began with the seizure of Hussar Hill and culminated in the storming of Pieter's Hill and the relief of Ladysmith, was the informal armistice for the burial of the dead, obtained on Sunday, February 25. Not that it was the first of its kind in the history of the campaign up to that date, for both Colenso and Spion Kop had claimed a breathing-space for the gathering of their dreadful and, alas! abundant harvests. The peculiar interest of the truce of Pieter's Hill lay first of all in the almost unique positions of the belligerents at the time of its happening, and secondly in the remarkable opportunity afforded by those positions for self and enemy to satisfy a little of that curiosity to see something of each other otherwise than through the medium of a raised rifle-sight, which has unconfessedly possessed both sides throughout the campaign. Never in the history of warfare had combatants been so mutually mysterious. Prisoners there had been in plenty, but a prisoner is but an unplumaged bird, and a singularly taciturn one at that, as a rule. What little he knows he prefers to keep to himself, and on points of such deep interest as the mental "condition" of his late comrades, their views of the present situation, and their prognostications of the future, even the most garrulous specimens are as silent as the grave they have escaped; to say nothing of the fact that on our part, at least, a sentiment of fair play and good taste has seldom allowed of their being questioned on these *sacra arcana* of fighting men. But on that Sunday on Pieter's Hill something like Carlyle's "little row of naphtha-lamps" did glimmer for a short time on the obscurity with which long range rifles, longer range Creusots, and exasperatingly long range retirements had hitherto enwrapped our friend — the enemy.

But before relating what took place on that "death-dealing" hill it may be as well to describe briefly the military position of the combatants, the frame which gave to the picture its striking character. Wednesday, February 14, witnessed at Chieveley the breaking up for the seventh time of the huge camp of Buller's relieving forces. Ever since the nightmare of Colenso (December 15) 25,000 men, with the "Red Bull"[1] at their head, had been groping along the foot of the heights, which form a natural parapet along the northern bank of the Tugela anywhere from Weenen

[1] Sir Redvers Buller's *sobriquet* among the Boers.

to Acton Homes, trying here and trying there, "like a big rat trying to get into a barn," as a Dutch prisoner inelegantly put it. The history of those "tries" does not come within the scope of the present article, but Potgieters, Spion Kop, and Vaal Krantz are the names by which they are known, and too well remembered. And now, on St Valentine's Day, another —and in any event, it was whispered, a last—attempt to break through that formidable cordon of Dutchmen and geological "freaks" was entered upon by the sudden swoop upon Hussar Hill. Then came the storming of Cingolo Mountain and Monte Cristo — a notable feat of Hildyard's Brigade, which has not attracted the attention it deserves—the hurried flight of the Boers from their fortress behind Colenso, followed on February 22 by the crossing of the Tugela for the fourth time, and that weird advance in the twilight, which has left more impression upon the minds of those who took part in it than any other incident of the campaign.

Amidst the incessant spitting and flashing of bullets, explosive and otherwise, Hart's Brigade made for Railway Hill, and Hildyard's for the flat-topped kopjes on the left of the railway. On the left of Hildyard, a battalion of the 60th Rifles; on their left again, slightly thrown back to guard the flanks, the Welsh Fusiliers, and I think the Rifle Brigade. Of Hart's movements that night I can say but little beyond that he was able to establish himself on the lower slopes of Railway Hill. My business lay on the plateau to his left, divided from him, as aforesaid, by the railway, and a broad, shallow watercourse, dry at this season. And a confused, indescribable sort of business it was in its early stages. Imagine a stony, steep hillside, undulating laterally into shallow depressions, and surmounted by the most indefinite and tricky of crest-lines, beyond which stretches a more or less level tract of boulder-strewn plateau, and beyond that, the Boers—and the Unknown! Our battalions strung out along the steep, whose base is the river itself; here a company, there a company, no ordered allotment of posts, for who can give orders *instanter* when a hill supposed to be unoccupied is found to be very much occupied indeed? It is a fact for which I can vouch, that the 60th Rifles advanced with the comparatively peaceful intention of taking up a line of outposts for the night, all innocent, as were higher authorities than they, that a Boer commando had already actually entrenched the rear edge of the plateau, and pushed their own picquets forward to the crest line, dominating the British advance. Behind the Rifles, the Devons were tramping solidly through the bullet-swept darkness, bayonets fixed, prepared for the "anything" it seemed extremely likely would happen. Behind them again, the Queen's, who with their fast friends the Devons, had "stuck it out" in many a hot, unreported corner

since the fiery baptism they shared at Colenso. (A fine regiment, the Queen's, whose work throughout the war has not been less admirable because in the Irish - cum - Highland monopoly of public attention it has been done comparatively unnoticed.) On their left the East Surrey, whose "gallery" work was yet to come, albeit it came quickly enough.

Subsequent events will never perhaps be thoroughly explained. Did the leading company of Rifles mistake the crest-line—as well they might—or were they ordered to take the position by assault? Their heroic commander, Captain the Hon. R. Cathcart, is beyond the reach of questions, for he lies buried among the boulders. What happened was unfortunately obvious enough. Up over the indefinite crest-line rushed the gallant "Sweeps," back fled the astonished Burghers, and away after them into the darkness charged and cheered that devoted company, totally unsupported, their very action unknown to those who might have supported them. A burst of fire from the trench ahead seems to have revealed the situation to them, and down, behind boulders and in depressions, they dropped, to await reinforcements before carrying the widely extending work in front of them. But no reinforcements came. Never a soul of the force which raggedly fringed the "hither" crest-line knew that a company of British infantry were scattered over the bare five hundred yards between themselves and the enemy. All night long that company lay there, whilst millions of bullets passed over them (not *all* over, alas!) from the holders of the opposing crest-lines. At dawn the situation of the little band became intolerable. No supports had come, or seemed likely to come. The movement of a finger, even in that half-light, brought a devastating fire from the Mausers in front, and it is more than probable from the Lee-Metfords in rear. Nothing to do but to retire on what in the growing daylight was the only fire position to be found. So the word was given, and by twos and threes the backward movement began.

At this juncture the fix the 60th were in appears to have dawned upon the authorities, and two companies of the East Surrey were ordered forward, somewhat to the left of the plateau, to cover the retreat. Which suffered most, supporters or supported, I do not know for certain. The number of dead upon the hill-top seemed afterwards to be about equal. Let it suffice to say, that in a few moments over fifty men and two officers fell dead,—the gallant Cathcart the rearmost of his command, as he had been foremost in the charge of the night before. Poor Hinton of the East Surrey struck by an explosive bullet in the head; the colonel, second in command, and three other officers of the East Surrey, all severely wounded, the first named in five or six places. Back to the crest-line dribbled the survivors, and then for a

time nothing more except the incessant swish, swish of bullets from triumphant Boer and exasperated Briton. Time—dawn, on the morning of February 23.

About 7 A.M. some officerless men, who had pushed forward into a very advanced position on the extreme right, quitted the sorry shelter they had contrived to scrape together during that indescribable night, and, as officerless men will, retired to the crest-line, *en masse*, a splendid target for the merciless Mausers behind them. They too left their quota of corpses on the plateau, and disaster might have ensued at this point had not two companies of another regiment, the Devons, dashed forward through the press and reoccupied the deserted *sangars*, almost before the enemy had become aware that they were evacuated. Result, a storm of fire, luckily hurried and ineffective, followed by a nasty shelling from a diabolically accurate 3-inch Creusot, also comparatively harmless, though the West Countrymen found but a bare twelve inches of small stones behind which to shelter when they dropped, breathless and expectant, into the lately deserted lines. Then another pause, utilised by the Queen's in audaciously pushing forward two or three companies into other unoccupied *sangars* on the extreme right, the foremost of which was certainly not more than two hundred and fifty yards from the Boer trenches. Perhaps the gentle Burgher was breakfasting, or more likely resting after his all-night vigil, —a relaxation to which, from a purely physical point of view, he was certainly entitled, for from 5 P.M. the previous night to 8 A.M. on this extraordinary morning he must have been manipulating his deadly little "bunches of fives"[1] absolutely without cessation. But the rest, or breakfast, or whatever it was, was of the briefest, and very soon the clack of the Mausers ("*clack*" at this range, "*click-clack*" at anything over a thousand yards) and the continuous pinging of bullets on the stones recommenced, though wellnigh inaudible amidst the incessant roll of our own deeper-toned Lee-Metfords. And so on for the rest of the day, without a pause, with hardly a slackening, whilst the men in the advanced *sangars* lay as flat as soles, and those lining the crest bobbed up and down—*pace* Sir Redvers[2]—and got rid of their two hundred rounds per man, with a good chance of a bullet in the brain accompanying every round thrust into the chamber. No time for Bisley æsthetics, when even the requisite five seconds' exposure attracts a like number of "leaden cores, with antimony and nickel jackets," boasting a velocity of 2500 "foot-seconds."

Meanwhile disastrous doings were in progress on Railway Hill, across the watercourse.

[1] The clip containing the cartridges for the Mauser rifle holds five rounds.

[2] Sir Redvers Buller, in animadverting in an Aldershot memorandum upon the practice of men "bobbing up" over cover to fire, and "bobbing down" again to load, laid it down that such methods were erroneous. "Battles," he said, "are not won by Jacks in boxes."

The writer having no part in them (being indeed one of the "soles" in the advanced *sangars* at the time), they will not be described in detail. Briefly—Hart with the Irishmen attempting to storm Railway Hill, was met by such a tornado of fire from an unsuspected trench in front that he was forced to fall back to his bivouac on the lower slopes, leaving 150 dead among the rocks. A terrible venture from which the Inniskillings suffered most, returning with but four officers alive and unwounded. And so night fell, with the Irishmen unhappily huddled together at the foot of their fatal hill, taking what rest they might amidst continuous sniping, pom-pomming, and occasional shelling, whilst the stream of bullets still whistled and wailed *pizzicato* over the plateau, across the railway, winding up over a sonorous *obligato* of shells during the last half hour of daylight. Not a cheerful day's work, and the "key"[1] apparently no nearer the lock than ever.

The events of Saturday, February 24, need no description, chiefly, to use an Irishism, because there were none. In fact, barring that there was no attack, the sniping, shelling, and pom-pomming on hill and plateau were an exact replica of that of the previous day, the shelling perhaps more severe, and at times effective. The real movements of that day were unostentatious, but, to those "in the know," full of portent. They consisted in the reinforcement of the forces on Railway Hill by the East Surrey and West Yorkshire regiments, drawn from Hildyard's Brigade, and an admirably conducted massing of artillery on the heights echeloned opposite the Boer position, but on the southern bank of the river. But no member of Buller's army will ever forget the tense feeling which pervaded the air on that uneventful Saturday. A tiger crouching before it springs is a limp, nerveless creature compared to a host of 25,000 desperate men preparing, perhaps unconsciously, for the onslaught that is to decide once and for ever the bloody quarrel of months. It is not too much to say that the relief of the 10,000 Britons beleaguered in Ladysmith overshadowed all else, even the ultimate issue of the whole campaign, in the minds of men and officers. Pretoria could wait; but comrades perishing of fever, starving on starved horse-flesh, driven to hide like conies in holes and burrows from the pitiless shells, every one of which was a fresh insult to battalions who had helped to overthrow Napoleon himself, they could *not* wait, and no words of mine can describe the fulness of that pause before the final casting of the die.

The few, the very few soldiers who were not on the alert already at dawn on Sunday, the 25th, awoke with a sensation that "something was up." They may, indeed, have been actually roused by the unwonted

[1] See Sir Redvers' speech to the troops at Spearmans, after the retirement from Spion Kop: "You have given me the key to Ladysmith."

silence reigning over hill and kopje, from which at bedtime—save the mark!—the previous night the discharge of rifles had been ringing as abruptly and as busily as ever. Some time elapsed before men were informed that an armistice had been agreed upon to bury the dead, and many a rifle which had only been awaiting a "good morning" from the trenches in front was half-reluctantly unloaded, its owner preparing to put in some of his much overdue sleep, or to move a few yards right or left for the purpose of comparing notes with comrades, whom, perhaps, he had actually not seen for three days.

The business preliminaries of an armistice are not complicated, but they have a picturesqueness of their own which may be of interest, if the reader, like the writer, has never before accompanied a flag of truce into the no-man's land which lies between opposing forces during an undecided action. Certainly the occurrence has not been witnessed in British warfare since the Crimea. Whether we on that dead-strewn plateau conducted the affair "according to Cocker" I do not know, but the ceremony, such as it was, will be faithfully described, despite the risk of disapproval from experts—still to be found in the capacious arm-chairs of Pall Mall and Piccadilly — in the proper conduct of the amenities of war. Colonel Hamilton of the Queen's, with his white flag, is the central figure, an officer who had times and again advanced just as calmly towards Boer trenches with something very different in his hand. Behold him, then, standing erect, in the mathematically exact centre of the debatable ground, with the emblem of fraternity — so basely and constantly abused by the Dutchmen, to their eternal discredit — lifted high above his head. Behind him a group of perhaps a dozen officers of the line, most of them possessing no earthly right to be present (*quorum pars parva fui*), and behind them again the advanced guard of a trenchful of curious private soldiers, all rather self-conscious, but glancing with steady eyes around at the poor dead with which the rocky ground was covered. Oh, those dead! how still and how uncouth they lay, all dreadful and discoloured by three days of tropical sun, and three damp, oppressive nights. Who can say that there is beauty in death? Certainly there is none in violent death, though in rare instances the body, so swiftly robbed of life, does fall into lines of dignity and nobility. But mostly the awesomely immobile form looks what it is—stricken, and, one would swear, shocked at its fate. There is little mistaking a dead man at any distance. Be the pose never so lifelike, there is an angularity, an utter nonchalance, an irresponsibility about the prone figure that fixes the attention at once. The writer will never forget awaking in the grey of the morning after a night on picquet, and on taking a look round over the slumbering forms of the men off duty, suddenly becoming aware that a

corpse—overlooked in the hurried removal of the dead who had fallen, when the kopje had been assaulted in the dusk of the previous evening—had slept the first night of his eternal sleep hard by the sleeping soldiers. There was nothing in the position of the cold body to differentiate it from the warm, living ones stretched around it; but the vast gulf lay between them, and one glance was enough to show on which side of the abyss lay each khaki-clad figure.

But all this is a digression. For a few moments — rather anxious ones it may be said — Colonel Hamilton and his little following stood motionless among the motionless dead, every eye fixed on the Boer trench, and a lively wonder in every mind as to what sort of entity would presently emerge therefrom. Behind, on our crest-line, all was silent as the grave; ahead, the same uncanny stillness. Suddenly a blunt-looking head emerged, apparently from the earth itself, followed by another, and another, outlined sharply against the clear green of Grobler's Kloof, a vast, hummocky, grass-clad mountain, whose outline had dogged us from Dan to Beersheba, from Colenso to Sugar-Loaf Hill. Then two or three figures showed openly on the parapet, their uprising reminding one of nothing so much as that of a gamekeeper straightening his back from the cramp of setting his traps in a weasel run.

But there was nothing of the gamekeeper about the man who first strode forward to meet us. Seldom have I set eyes on a more magnificent specimen of male humanity than the commandant of the trenchful of Boers, Pristorius by name, a son of Anak by descent, and a gallant, golden-bearded fighting-man by present occupation; for in far-away Middleburg those mighty limbs—he told it us without any of that stupid deprecation which would probably have characterised a similar confession on the part of an Englishman—were wont to stretch themselves beneath a lawyer's desk. Close on his heels came what a person who had never seen Boers before would have thought the strangest band of warriors in the world: old men with flowing, tobacco-stained, white beards; middle-aged men with beards burnt black with the sun and sweat of their forty years; young men, mostly clean shaven, exhibiting strongly the heavy Dutch moulding of the broad nose and chin; big boys in small suits; suits of all kinds and colours, tweed, velveteen, homespun, and "shoddy," all untidy in the extreme, but mostly as serviceable as their wearers. The only sign of a uniform was the turn-out of Pristorius himself, a suit of well-made khaki, studded with silver buttons and silver stars wherever there was room for button or star. A gentleman, and a dandy, this Pristorius, who bewailed comically the loss of his boots and hair-brushes in the scurry from Monte Cristo. "Monte Cristo, you call it!" laughed he; "I call it a small Hell!"

But it must not be supposed

that the conversation became general, as the novelists say, all at once, despite the affability of the commandant. At first a masked disposition showed itself in each little party to remain clustered round its leader, and even when the Britishers had stared and thawed sufficiently to allow them to separate, and endeavour to engage in conversation individuals of their momentary friends the enemy, the latter still evinced a reserve, tempered with sullenness, and a slight admixture of rudeness, which rendered a *rapprochement* a task requiring no little tact and diplomacy. How they hate and suspect us, those ignorant back-country farmers! One can trace generations of misinformation and self-sufficiency in their lowering eyes, and the ungainly arrogance and assertiveness of their gestures.

Here, too, it was very evident that it was much more difficult for them to conceal the natural discomposure which all men feel in the presence of the silent dead than for their more artificial opponents. From the airy and easy demeanour of the uniformed British officers, that dreadful plateau might have been the lobby of a London club. A Briton is at all times prone to conceal his emotions, and certainly in this instance the idiosyncrasy gave him a great social advantage over the superstitious Burghers, with their sidelong glances and uneasy shiftings. But as time went on matters improved, and presently the writer found himself plunged into quite an animated discussion on the merits and demerits of night attacks with a deep-chested old oak-tree of a man, whose swarthy countenance was rendered more gipsy-like by the addition of earrings. The opening of the conversation had its humours. "Good morning!" quoth I. "Gumorghen," rumbled the oak-tree sourly. "Surely we can be friends for five minutes," I ventured, after a pause. The rugged countenance was suddenly, not to say startlingly, illumined with a beaming smile. "*Why* not, indeed! *why* not, officer! have you any tobacco?" Out came my pouch, luckily filled to bursting that very morning, and the oak-tree proceeded to stuff a huge pipe to the very brim, gloating over the fragrance of the "best gold flake" as he did so. The rumour of tobacco had the effect of dispelling the chill that still lingered on the outskirts of that little crowd, and many a grimy set of fingers claimed their share as the price of the friendship of the owners, the commandant himself not disdaining to accept a fill with a graceful word of thanks. They were out of tobacco in that trench, it appeared, and suffering acutely from the deprivation of what to a Boer is more necessary than food. Was I guilty of "aiding and abetting the Queen's enemies" by thus easing their torments for a while?

Meantime a little army of stretcher-bearers had come up, and were busy removing the corpses and the three or four unhappy men who had managed to keep the spark of life in their poor bodies during those terrible three days and nights. I spoke to two of these survivors, and

learned some curious facts about the men whose bullets had condemned them to the almost unimaginable torments of mind and body they had endured. The Boers, it appears, had not left these lonely wretches untended, though they would have ruthlessly shot down any one from our side who left cover to carry the sufferers in. As a matter of fact it was not known that there were any wounded on the plateau at all. Once in the night a gruff voice, apparently from within a yard or two of our most advanced *sangars*, had shouted out in the darkness and silence, "*Why don't you come out and look after your wounded?*" but alas for Boer morality! the strange cry in the night had but been taken for a "plant," a ruse to lure our riflemen from their shelters, and the men who heard it only gripped their weapons the firmer, and prepared for a rush, congratulating themselves as they crouched, every nerve strained in listening, on their own "slimness."

By this time the plateau was presenting quite an animated scene. Parties of Boers and British officers were strolling about in all directions, never approaching *too* near their respective defences. Here stood a little group of Dutchmen around a Briton, there a like number of Britons around an interesting Boer. A young officer of the Devons was busily engaged in preparing to take a snap-shot of the scene. Up rushes a youthful Boer, an ill-kempt, emasculated stripling, beseeching that his unlovely form might not be omitted from the picture. It was amusing to see the anxiety on his unhealthy face, and the gratified smile, which answered the bronzed young Englishman's good-natured one of acquiescence, and then the self-conscious awkwardness of the youngster's subsequent pose for the operation whose results he would never see.

My next conversational effort was with a tall, shifty-looking Dutchman who appeared somewhat "out of it," whom, therefore, feelings of hospitality prompted me to try and put at his ease. (We English, I think, all inexplicably felt as if we were the hosts and the Boers guests on this occasion. Was it from a premonition that forty-eight hours hence that hill-top would be trod by no man without our permission?) After a few desultory remarks upon the weather, horse-sickness, the prospects (agricultural only) of the next few weeks, &c., &c., the Burgher's share in which was chiefly monosyllabic and none too civil, I at last blurted out a question I had been longing to put all the morning, as soon as relations should be established on a sufficiently friendly footing. "Aren't you fellows sick of this?" I said. "How much longer do you intend to keep us out here, and yourselves from your farms and families?" The reply was more frank than I had expected. "Of course we don't like it any more than you do; but, three years, yes! three years we will stay out and fight!" This with an air as if to say, "There! if that doesn't astonish you, I don't know what will!"

"But, my friend," I replied unveraciously, "we *do* like it; it is our trade—what we live for and by; and as to three years, why, we are prepared to fight you for thirty, if necessary!"

The Boer seemed surprised, and hadn't the wit to hide it. Probably the idea of a standing army is ungraspable by a real back-country guerilla republican. "Er—er—ah—er, some settlement will come before then, is it not?" he murmured. I shook my head portentously, as if to imply that there could be but one settlement, the undiscussable one of unconditional surrender.

Several of his comrades then joined us, amongst them one or two of those offensive little half-bred French and Germans, about whom one wonders nothing so much as the reason why the big solemn Boers allow them to sully the dignity of their commandos. One of these, an under-sized red-headed atrocity, with inferior teeth, and a water-bottle stolen from a wounded man on Spion Kop (he informed me of this himself), was also full of the subject of night attacks. "Why do you seely beoble kip on, kip on wiz your night attags? You find us asleeb neffer. You are shot, efery one; look 'ere!" and he pointed to the corpses on every side. "It is verr sad," chimed in a compatriot unctuously, and as I maintained a discreet silence the subject did not flourish, though one or two Dutchmen maintained a voluble argument on it amongst themselves for some time.

"Ah! but the armoured train at Frere, zat was ze sing," was the next remark I understood. "Ve was sorry for your brafe beobel, ja wohl!"

Pristorius, in his gentlemanly way, next claimed the public ear, and the burden of his speech was—explosive bullets! Rather a staggerer this for his British hearers, who had lived for the last three days amidst an incessant shower of these unlawful projectiles. But the lawyer of Middleburg well knew the advantage of a "first plaint," and very grave and judicial were his remarks upon our shortcomings in this respect. Every prisoner, he averred, had been relieved of hundreds of split, dum-dum, and explosive bullets, until a pile "so high"—he indicated a height of about five feet with one hand—stood upon Bulwana as a cairn, a monument to British perfidy. It was in vain that the impossibility of such a thing was pointed out. His commandantship listened in well-bred silence, and a well-bred and hardly perceptible shrug of his mighty shoulders.

"Let us talk no more of it, it is politics!" he said with a smile, and brushed the crucial question aside as easily as he had done many more which threatened to mar the harmony of the proceedings.

About this time our men from the *sangars* in rear were approaching somewhat too closely to the strolling Boer soldiery on the plateau, and the commandant began to get weary. At his request, therefore, both sides were ordered

back to their lines, an operation carried out by the Dutchman by a mere wave of the arm, and a loud monosyllable like the cry of a corncrake. Our men thereupon retired, with an expression of face that plainly said, that where a Boer could walk there would a British soldier walk also, until the rights of the matter were settled *vi et armis*. It was funny to notice the demeanour of Mr Atkins when in such equivocal close quarters to his foeman as that permitted by a truce in the middle of a long and bloody battle. It must be confessed that it was somewhat of the melodramatic order, doubtless a not ineffective method of impressing imaginations so crude as those of the back-country Boers. I do not think that there was a single private soldier of her Majesty's forces on that hill-top who had not got his arms folded across his breast. Thus they advanced, thus they stood and stared at their loose-jointed opponents, and thus they retired at the word of command, slowly and gravely, the embodiment of dignified discipline. Rather to my relief, the Boers *did* appear impressed. These red-necks were no "junkers," but bearded men, with all the bronze and fitness of four months' continuous campaigning upon them. Who can say but that this informal private view had some effect on the triumphant finale of two days later?

By this time—nearly 6 P.M. —the last dead had been collected and buried; the wearied and saddened chaplain had said the last solemn words over the huge grave containing the husks of so many brave departed spirits. The truce was at an end, though the influence of it lingered for a while even after Briton and Boer had parted with a wave of the hand or a ceremonious salute, or, as in more than one case, a curiously inscrutable *auf wiedersehen*. Not a shot broke the deathly stillness of that Sunday evening until 10 P.M., when apparently some overwrought Boer "had to let off or shout," as a recruit once said in explanation of a shot fired by him during a night march at Aldershot! From that moment up to the terrific culmination of artillery and musketry fire on Tuesday, February 27, there was never again a cessation of the firing.

The bombardment and storming of Pieter's Hill is a story of itself. A story of ninety-five heavy guns thundering lyddite and shrapnel on to crowded trenches; of the roar and rattle of 25,000 rifles, and of thirty Maxims; of brave Boers who stood up like men in the infernal hail, and braver Britons who rushed and cheered, and slew and spared as their fathers had done before them; of terrified men on ponies, flying and fighting with one another for a way from the pursuing peril behind; and eventually of silence, and the almost whispered word—"The job is done at last, Ladysmith is relieved!"

LINESMAN.

THE WAR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.—VIII.

BY A MILITARY CONTRIBUTOR.

ACROSS THE VAAL—JOHANNESBURG—PANIC IN PRETORIA—THE FLAG HOISTED—A SOUTH AFRICAN MARCH—SOLDIERS' BOOTS—MOUNTED ENGINEERS—COMMUNICATIONS—THE BOERS AS CAVALRY—MOBILITY—NATAL CLEARED—LAING'S NEK—MEMORIES OF THE VELDT.

THE rearrangement of the transport had stood the test of the march from Bloemfontein so admirably, that Lord Roberts felt justified in starting for the Vaal; and rapidity would be again a dominant feature of the march. Resistance was promised at Rhenoster river, while at the Vaal it had to be reckoned upon as a supreme effort of despair. But the tactics hitherto successful could still be relied on. He had virtually cut himself adrift from his one line of supply, trusting that daring and rapidity would carry him through. So on the 22nd May, after less than a fortnight's halt at Kroonstad, he moved eighteen miles north, reaching, the next day, the south bank of the Rhenoster river, to find the Boers holding eleven miles of the opposite bank with a series of cunningly constructed rifle-pits resembling those at Paardeberg, and gun emplacements, so it was reported, for fifteen guns; two 6-inch Creusots on a ridge two miles in rear: patches of grass had been burnt in front to give the range, which had to be carefully avoided. But during the night the defence completely collapsed—the Boers trekking without firing a shot, doubtless alarmed by the flanking movements of General Hamilton with the mounted infantry who was covering the right at Heilbron on the east; and of General French with two cavalry brigades at Parys on the west — both columns having preceded the main body, moving along the railway in the centre, which seemed to the Boers to aim at Vereeniging; the eastern force making for Engelbrecht drift, the western for somewhere opposite Parys, thus indicating a crossing to be attempted at those three points. But again they were outwitted. General French certainly crossed at Lindeques drift, opposite Parys, on the 24th, marking her Majesty's birthday by the invasion of the Transvaal. But on the 25th inst., three days after leaving Kroonstad, the whole distribution of the advance on the Vaal was changed. General French, on the left, kept to his orignal line; but General Hamilton crossed our front, screened by Gordon's cavalry, and concentrated near Vredefort on the west, leaving the Boers, to the number of 4000, facing Engelbrecht drift, still under the impression that he

was advancing north. On the 26th he crossed almost unopposed some miles west of the railway. Colonel Henry, with the 4th Brigade Mounted Infantry and the Bedfordshire Yeomanry, crossed at Viljoens drift to drive a mob of Irish-Americans before him, in time to prevent them from destroying more than a single span of the bridge and to save the coal-mines on the north bank, besides capturing three days' supplies for the army. Headquarters, with the 7th and 11th Infantry Divisions, had moved from Tiabosch, seven miles south, to the Vaal opposite Vereeniging—the infantry crossing on the 27th in a pont, without opposition, to encamp on the north bank. Next day a march of twenty miles took the main column to Klip river, where the enemy had prepared several positions; but one after another was abandoned as Lord Roberts approached—pressing them so hard, that they had only just time to get their five guns into the train as the West Australians dashed into the station. At daybreak on the 29th Colonel Henry, with the mounted infantry, left Klip river, with orders to seize Elandsfontein Junction at all costs. He was supported by the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, which was to make a wide detour east of Boksburg, the infantry following as fast as possible; then to move to the east of Johannesburg, so as to outflank the enemy's defensible positions. The advance-guard arrived at the junction just in time to fire into the last train, with half the Heidelberg commando retiring from Laing's Nek to Pretoria on board, when the line was cut and time given for the infantry to come up and complete the occupation. The capture was so unexpected that it included nine locomotives, a train laden with coal, and a great quantity of rolling stock.

On the morning of the 30th Lord Roberts was at the gates of Johannesburg, where he received the town commandant, who begged him to delay his entry for twenty-four hours, as the town still contained many armed burghers,—a request which Lord Roberts complied with, being anxious to avoid a disturbance in the streets, while the enemy were still holding hills in the immediate vicinity, from which they would need to be cleared off beforehand. On the 31st, accompanied by the town commandant, he rode into the town to the Government offices, when the British flag was hoisted before a good crowd in the main square. A royal salute was fired and three cheers for the Queen given; the ceremony concluding with a march-past of the 11th and 7th Divisions, the Naval Brigade, and the Royal Artillery; an infantry brigade remaining in the town to preserve order; the remainder encamping north of it on the Pretoria road.

It was sound strategy that induced Lord Roberts to make a dash for the railway junction at Germiston instead of Johannesburg or Pretoria, though the capture of the President

might follow. The central point of the railway-system of the State in his hands, ultimate resistance must be paralysed; for no important concentration could be possible, either at Pretoria in the centre or at any point outside. The connection by rail of the Boers facing General Buller at Laing's Nek with Pretoria was cut, and any power to effect a junction between commandos which were making for it was rendered hopeless. Strategically the possession of the junction commanded the railway to Pretoria, to Klerksdorp, to the Natal frontier, and to Bloemfontein, — thus isolating the capital from the bulk of the Boer forces in the field; while the Delagoa line was within striking distance. This masterly stroke forced a British army into the Boer strategic centre, and it was easy to predict that the collapse of the war would follow. Had the Boers at the commencement of the campaign been gifted with strategic intelligence, they would have seized Naauwpoort Junction, then undefended, thus obtaining command of the entire railway-system of Cape Colony, when they would have been able to ride triumphantly through the revolting districts, east; westward, through Griqualand; and south to threaten Cape Town itself, there to dictate those terms of which they boasted at the time. Lord Methuen's column would not have been able to issue out north to form an entrenched camp at Modder river, — first, to act as a screen in front of the concentration of the troops about to strike at Bloemfontein; then as an advanced base for that movement when in progress. The sentimentality which induced them to scatter themselves before places so widely separate and strategically unimportant as Kimberley and Mafeking, is a good example of the folly of introducing sentiment into warfare.

No sooner was possession of the junction secure than the mounted infantry, with a cavalry brigade in support, moved off east, to find the Boers in position on some ridges south of the road with five guns, which were able to shell the force with some effect, as owing to a mishap to Klip river bridge it had no artillery with which to reply: but the mounted infantry managed to work round towards the Pretoria road, and at noon gained a rise above Boksburg, when the Rand lay before them. To the west the column, made up of part of the cavalry division, General Ian Hamilton's mounted infantry, two infantry brigades, and some Colonials, had moved parallel to the main advance since it left the Vaal, and on the 29th was opposite Johannesburg, about twelve miles distant. Here it was reported that 4000 Boers with six guns were in position east of Doornkop. Our troops hurried on to attack the Boer centre, which they found strengthened with many natural obstacles, the ground blackened with grass-fires, against which the khaki made an excellent mark. The ad-

vance was steady, supported by the guns, which after an hour's fighting were able to move closer; Porter's brigade riding out five miles farther west to turn the enemy's right, which they succeeded in doing after continuous and stubborn resistance, when the infantry, pushing the attack home, gradually drove them from every kopje; the Gordons distinguishing themselves by advancing to within fifteen yards of the Boers with fixed bayonets, when they fled precipitately. Commandant Botha and 100 prisoners, many of them foreign and Irish mercenaries, a Creusot gun, and twelve waggons of stores and ammunition, were captured. Thus the entry into Johannesburg was unopposed, not only in response to Lord Roberts when he knocked at the gates and demanded admission, but quite as much owing to the action of the two columns on his flanks.

The distance to Pretoria from Johannesburg is a little over thirty miles by the road, which at starting climbs the Witwatersrand ridge that stretches due east and west for 100 miles, commanding Johannesburg and offering a magnificent position against an enemy advancing from the south, if held in sufficient force. On the eastern extremity are the coal-mines of Boksburg, and everywhere along rise the ugly chimneys of the gold-mines underneath the coarse stony herbage, huge rubbish-heaps presenting natural redoubts to the defence. North of the ridge the country is bare and dreary, with green patches scattered along the sources of the Limpopo; the surface mostly free from obstacles, boulders, kloofs, or kopjes, but intersected by low ridges and shallow valleys. Pretoria lies in a large shallow basin enclosed by low hills, five of which are crowned by forts, of which two of the strongest profile command the open country south, across which Lord Roberts advanced. The troops that had marched through Johannesburg encamped outside, facing Pretoria, on the 2nd inst.; headquarters at a small inn at Orange Grove; the columns which had afforded flanking protection as before—General French with three cavalry brigades continuing the enveloping movement on the left; three infantry brigades, with the heavy guns at the head, on the right flank covered by a cavalry brigade; General Hamilton's division of mounted infantry three miles distant from the left of the main column; the whole covered by a strong force of mounted infantry. On the 3rd inst. there was some desultory firing on the scouts, but it was not till Six Mile Spruit was reached on the next day that any real resistance was offered. The Boers were found in occupation of both banks; but the mounted infantry and Royal Yeomanry quickly dislodged them from the south bank, pursuing them for nearly a mile, when they found themselves under a heavy fire from some guns in a well-concealed and commanding position. Our heavy guns, which had purposely been

placed in front, hurried up, supported by an infantry brigade, and after a few rounds drove the enemy out. An attempt to turn our left was met by the mounted infantry, supported by Maxwell's infantry brigade, and they were finally driven back by General Hamilton. But night coming on, the pursuit had to be abandoned, and the troops bivouacked on the ground gained after nearly twelve hours' marching and fighting; the Guards brigade less than four miles from the town on the south; General French with three cavalry brigades and mounted infantry to the north of it; a cavalry brigade between him and General Hamilton's column farther south; while Gordon's cavalry brigade guarded the right flank of the main force near Irene station, eight miles due south.

The capture of Johannesburg had caused intense excitement in Pretoria, where the commandants tried in vain to rally the burghers in retreat through the town, most of them with horses done up and themselves worn out and downcast; the artillery rapidly entraining by the Delagoa line, which was still open; to be followed by Kruger, Reitz, and other members of the Raad, with a large sum in gold. On this becoming known, an utter state of panic and collapse of the government ensued,—a state of things in no wise allayed by a report that Kruger had commandeered all the gold in the banks, and was to make a raid for it that night. On the 24th inst. the last train for Delagoa Bay left, filled with men flying in utter panic; the foreign element and mercenaries started looting, helped by many burghers and men of the commandos flying through. The most fear was on account of these foreign adventurers, whose action hitherto had been most destructive when their taste could be indulged in with safety: it was only when fighting was required that their inclinations preferred activity elsewhere. The excitement was added to by the crowds of refugees coming in from Johannesburg by road or rail. A vigilance committee was appointed to protect life and property; to be followed, as our army pushed nearer, by the Krygsraad, or War Council, assuming the powers of the government, and authorising Judge de Sonza to receive Lord Roberts. A committee to preserve life was appointed; and as disturbance and bloodshed were anticipated among the prisoners, the American Consul and Mr Leigh Wood insisted on twenty officers being liberated on parole to go to the men and preserve order. Their action quieted the people, and crowds of them began to assemble in Church Square expectant of the arrival of our troops.

Just before dark on the 5th the enemy had been driven back from nearly all the positions they had been holding round Pretoria, General Ian Hamilton following them up to within 2000 yards of the town, through which they retreated hastily; Colonel De Lisle sending an officer after them with a

flag of truce demanding its surrender. His demand brought out two officials, with a letter proposing an armistice to settle the terms, who roused up Lord Roberts about midnight; to be told that the surrender must be unconditional, and that a reply should be forthcoming by daybreak, when the troops had orders to march on the town. Commandant Botha replied that he had decided to make no defence, a decision which was confirmed by three principal civil officials who met Lord Roberts as he was marching in, stating their wish to surrender; when it was arranged that possession of Pretoria by her Majesty's troops should be taken that afternoon. General Pole-Carew with an advance-guard of the Coldstreams was the first to enter, preceding Lord Roberts and his staff, who rode into the Square at 2 P.M.; the Grenadier Guards forming the guard of honour lined the streets, when, in the presence of a vast crowd, the flag was hoisted and saluted, the Guards Brigade playing the National Anthem; after which the troops, consisting of portions of every division of all arms, except the cavalry, marched past, the captured officers being present. All the prisoners had been released except about 900 Colonials that the Boers had managed to carry off east to where Kruger was encamped.

The wide gap on the east, which it had been impossible to close, allowed the great body of the Boers, with nearly all their guns, to escape. An attempt to cut the Delagoa line had been made by Major Hunter-Weston with some mounted Engineers, escorted by 200 cavalry; but the party was intercepted by Boers in sufficient force, and a large quantity of rolling stock got away. An attempt to carry off the whole of the prisoners failed, our men capturing the prison guards who attempted to carry out the order, and holding them prisoners till the cavalry came up. The Boers who escaped through this gap checked their retreat some fifteen miles east, where a strong position across the road induced Botha once more to make a stand, to delay our advance and give time for the more distant commandos to concentrate farther east. His presence acted as a rallying-point for the many bands of Boers wandering, without a leader, up and down the land, to such an extent as to make the collection of supplies and of arms difficult. On the 11th June Lord Roberts moved to attack them, to find the position they held practically unassailable in front, the main strength of the Boers being posted on the flanks: experience had taught them our favourite mode of attack. Fighting went on till dark; the cavalry and mounted infantry moving round the flanks meeting with great opposition, till at three o'clock the infantry approached what appeared to be the key of the position on the left flank. It was nearly dark, and the whole force bivouacked on the ground they had won. General Hamilton and a brigade of Guards at the centre, finding that Botha in strengthening his flanks had weakened

his centre, pushed forward and took the hill in front, causing the enemy to fall back on a second position, from which they fled during the night, as usual, to retire eastwards.

During the fight Q Battery R.H.A., seeing a gap in the enemy's line behind which two guns were firing shrapnel with damaging accuracy, hoping to silence them and break up his first line, galloped for it and unlimbered. At once a large mounted body charged in close formation to within sixty yards and opened fire. To extricate the guns, the 12th Lancers formed up in the open and charged; but the Boers did not wait long enough for them to get home—they scattered, leaving ten dead on the field, and the guns were saved, the cavalry retiring under a galling fire. Simultaneously another mass of Boers attacked our right flank. The Household Cavalry wheeled out from behind a kopje and charged. The moral effect was too much for the enemy, who fled demoralised; 100 of them in a kraal evacuated it in sheer terror of the sword. Later on the Derbyshire, C.I.V., and Sussex regiments seized the ridge forming the key to the position and advanced to the assault; but on coming to the top they were exposed on the plateau to a most deadly fire, and, though supported by the Coldstreams, were unable to advance, and for two hours lay exposed to a murderous fire, from an ascertained range, from the Boers' second position. Then the 82nd Battery was hauled up with a desperate effort and unlimbered amid a tornado of concentrated fire, but fifteen rounds of shrapnel at 1000 yards had their effect, and our 5-inch guns found the position of their quick-firers. The infantry, after taking punishment all day, leapt to their feet and finished them with their bayonets.

It was about this time that the force of Lord Roberts and that of General Buller began to afford each other mutual assistance: the occupation of Pretoria caused numbers of Boers to withdraw from Laing's Nek; and Buller's advance to Volksrust, on the 13th inst., made those under Botha fear that their rear would shortly be threatened. In this case, as before, they showed a remarkable ability to get away unmolested with their guns and train; but the country is mountainous and difficult, and, as Lord Roberts says, "the great extent to be covered under modern war conditions renders progress very slow." But behind all this must be placed their intimate knowledge of the ground—farmers, in many instances, moving across their own farms. An object-lesson again to young military talent not to despise simple problems about hills and slopes, roads and streams: half an hour in the field is time better spent than a couple of hours of Jomini in the library.

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In the advance of Lord Roberts to Pretoria three facts stand out in bold relief—the military instinct which divined what the enemy expected him

to do; the legitimate use of mounted infantry; and the magnificent marching power of his infantry. For the first, he found the Boers entrenched across his path whenever the natural features of the ground tempted them to await his coming—at the Vet, the Zand, the Valsch, the Rhenoster, and the Klip rivers; but the wary Boer knew by experience his habit of turning a flank, and so extended his line of defence, sometimes for fifteen or twenty miles, laterally, a move Lord Roberts met by dividing his army into three—the central portion to menace and contain the position in front, while two portions, largely mounted, with sufficient infantry support to ensure their safety if isolated, moved parallel to and at some distance from the central force, thus threatening both the Boer flanks, uncertain which of them was to be turned, leaving it possible for one of the flanking columns to cross over and join the column opposite the other flank, when a combined attack could be made, as was done at Brandfort and the Vaal. This plan entailed the further advantage of rapidity: instead of the advance being delayed, with loss, before each successive position, it was continued without a check. Brandfort was taken on the 3rd of May and Johannesburg on the 29th, a little under a month: if a delay of three days had occurred at the five rivers mentioned, it would have added a fortnight's time for the Boer concentration on the Vaal or round Pretoria—themselves in the best of spirits to meet the British, lessened in numbers, and worn-out in spirit owing to continued acquaintance with slouch-hats behind boulders.

Secondly, the mounted infantry crossed the Vaal to effect a lodgment on the opposite bank, from which they covered the passage of the main column next day, a movement screened on the near bank by the cavalry, which was purely their duty; and it was the mounted infantry which galloped on in front to Germiston, with orders to seize the junction and hold it at all costs till the infantry came up, which they did, using their horses merely as a means of locomotion, the fighting to commence after they disappeared. The consequence of their rapid arrival at a coveted strategic point was that the Boers were faced by the unexpected, and fled with scarcely a show of resistance. Lastly, the marching power of the infantry, who after leaving Kroonstad covered 115 miles in eight days, and this not on an ordinary road, with refreshment at frequent public-houses, water bubbling from springs everywhere, a temperate climate and a comfortable bed at night, nothing to carry, and the company of a friend to pass the time; but over a track ankle-deep in mud or sand, through a waterless country, what water there was fouled with the rush of animals in front; the streams, if any, slow-running through the bog, an ox in a pool it had made for itself to die in just above; fuel, dry cow-dung or an ant-

hill if any happened about, a fierce wind all day, loaded with stones and grit that blind and sting, under a blazing sun, breathing the dust-clouds that rise from the tramp of 10,000 feet trudging in "fours," packed close, a rifle and ammunition to carry, no publics on the way, often no tent to shelter through the frosty night, "bully-beef" and a biscuit to fill an eager stomach, and a hole for the hip-bone when the march is over. A young soldier marching through the Free State tells how it is done:—

"We had orders to march off at 4 P.M., so we fell in, having previously struck camp. Then we took off our accoutrements and sat down. During that time a couple of heavy storms wetted us through; it has been raining most of the time. Half an hour after we had started it was pitch dark; what they called the road, a mere track, was over ankle-deep in thick, sticky mud, and it was like walking over a ploughed field. The men struggled along as best they could, and I acted as slave-driver in rear of the company: a good many sank exhausted in the mud, but we kept on till ten o'clock. Part of the time I was carrying two rifles; but I am very fit, and did not feel it much. Of course our waggons, with tents, greatcoats, and everything else, had stuck, and did not reach us till eight o'clock next morning. I spent most of the night walking up and down in the rain; there was a cold wind blowing, and if any one lay down he got so numbed that he could not sleep. It was a wretched night, and bitterly cold, as we had nothing but waterproof sheets to lie on. There is not too much to eat, but there are fields of mealies which fill up the gaps—we managed to get a chicken and a duck. The rations have been still further reduced, as we have not enough to last till we reach Bethulie. It is awful for the men—hard marching and semi-starvation. We should have gone on, only the oxen were too exhausted to go any farther. We are encamped at Olivier's farm, the Boer general, but we are not allowed even to take a few sticks to light a fire with, to boil some tea or cocoa, in spite of the numbed condition of every one—it makes you feel a bit sick. Our company was told off to help the ox-waggons through the drifts when they stuck, which they did pretty frequently; they delay us terribly; starting fairly early in the morning, but seldom in before dark, so the men have to hang about waiting for them. My boots have gone all to pieces, owing to the bad state of the roads, and are actually in bits, but I manage to get along all right. We have very little food with us, so the commissariat officer has to commandeer at all the farms as we go along, to help out our rations. I lost half a tooth again eating the biscuits; they are most infernally hard. Two of my men fell down flat this morning in the last mile, simply from exhaustion, and it took some time to get them round. On leaving Smithfield with our prisoners, all their relations came up and howled over them, bringing them milk, butter, &c., which they told us the day before could not be obtained for love or money. The old *fraus* were awfully indignant, and if we had not known how very willing any of them would have been to shoot us on sight, you might have been quite touched. I did not pity them a bit, as all the prisoners had broken their oaths and taken up arms against us for the second time. The general got an order to commandeer, so we now have large flocks of sheep, goats, and herds of cattle driven along with us: it is the very thing to bring the people to their senses—they won't like losing all their cattle. The rain is ghastly, and I am on picket to-night, which means twenty-four hours, soaked through, and nothing can be cooked."

Then those boots. If an officer complains that his are all to pieces, what must have been the state of the men's? Now, boots are to the soldier as hoofs to the horse; no wise

man buys a horse without looking to his hoofs: to go, both man and horse must have something sound to go upon. A good deal of care is given now to soldiers' boots: they are well made, the leather fairly soft, the shape better than it was, perhaps as good as it can be for the money. The War Office does its share: it is the regiment that should do more. The cases come to the quartermaster, who serves out the contents. Tommy, as a rule, knows his number and gets it: if the boots hurt him, he can change them: but he is a dandy in the boot-and-shoe line, and likes them small, with pointed toes, and sticks to his fancy stoutly; so he produces bunched-up toes, and the joint of his big toe that pains, to get a lift in the ambulance — the boots he likes won't do 115 miles in eight days.

Company officers who see to the fit of their men's clothes are hardly to blame; it is not their feet that the boots pinch: squeeze or poke how they may, they won't find where the shoe pinches; so the man's word is taken, and his boots "will do." No doubt company officers look to their men's feet before and after a march; feet are soaped, blisters are sent to the doctor, some feet go to hospital, but the boots, the cause of much, remain, — often sodden with splashing through streams, baked dry too soon by the sun; while to sleep in them, as is often "in orders," leaves the poor perspiring feet soft and tender for to-morrow's march.

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Any Boer successes have been consequent on their mobility meeting a slower-moving foe. It was mobility that rendered possible unexpected change of flank; mobility which, round Dewetsdorp, allowed a smaller force to elude four divisions, two of them mounted; mobility enabled them to catch us at Koorn Spruit and Reddersburg; everywhere to escape with their guns and waggons except at Paardeberg. So mobility has come to stay; the proportion of mounted troops will increase; machine-guns that can gallop with horse artillery will be necessities; guns of position will take a place in the field; traction engines are found useful—next time we fight we are going to do it at a trot, the days of "trot and walk" are over. The Royal Engineers are a dismounted corps: a troop was mounted in South Africa, attached to the cavalry division, and its work with it proves how essential it is to provide Engineers, at least a large part of them, with mobility. Railway and telegraph lines are now integral pieces of the war-game—the safety or destruction of one or other as important as a battle. Mounted infantry can assure the first; cavalry in groups or small parties the second; their action secret, sudden, and rapid. But Engineers must ride with them. It reads so easy to blow up anything, but to blow up irreparably, requires skill in demolition: the capture of the howitzer on the hills above Ladysmith cost many men,

owing to the delay in firing the charge. An example of what trained skill can do was given when Major Weston-Hunter, R.E., with seven men of the field troop, were sent by General French to cut the railway north of Bloemfontein. He started at midnight, mounted on picked horses: a wide sweep had to be made to avoid Boer pickets; though the night was dark and the ground broken with nullahs the line was reached before daylight, and a search made for a place suitable for demolition. This was a culvert supported on iron girders, one of which was rapidly prepared by placing two 10 lb. charges of gun-cotton against the web, which were fired within twenty minutes, completely wrecking the line, and resulting in the capture of twenty-five locomotives, 108 trucks, many loaded with coal, and a general panic in the town when the line was reported impassable.

Equally important is it that a telegraph section accompanies a large body of cavalry, to keep it in constant communication, during the ride, with headquarters: the work done by the mounted troop R.E. in keeping Lord Kitchener at Klip drift informed, resulted in the capture of Cronje. There are many occasions when Engineers riding with a large independent cavalry command can perform useful service; as to find water, an absolute necessity for horses travelling fast and far; with mounted infantry, to bring skilled knowledge to bear on the construction and direction of hasty defences, when a position has to be held until the arrival of the support. It is said that the scratches our men made on the top of Spion Kop were, in the absence of Engineers, traced in impossible soil and in the line of prolongation of the Boer fire.

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The communications of the army stretched in a single, tenuous line from the Orange river to the Vaal, upwards of 300 miles, through virtually an enemy's country, and proved a great temptation to the commandos which still ranged through the difficult country east, hoping that a sudden raid might cut it at an unguarded point to hamper our advance indirectly, and assist their friends across the Vaal. Generals Rundle and Brabant, guarding the line, discovered that a mounted Boer in his own country is difficult to catch, and much too slippery to be drawn into an action. The infantry had driven them before them to Senekal, which they found deserted except by some Boer spies. But in the afternoon of the 25th inst. a commando entered the town, remaining till General Rundle, with the 8th Division, came up, when they fled to Wilkop, twelve miles east, leaving a few behind, who, assisted by some of the townspeople, concealed themselves in a house and treacherously fired, killing Major Dalbiac and four men. On the 28th inst. a report came in that Colonel Spragge

and a battalion of Yeomanry *en route* to join the Guards' Brigade, were in a critical position three miles west of Lindley; so General Rundle, hoping to extricate them, moved out against the Boers, who were in a position a little north. He found them holding it in force, with five guns and several pom-poms mounted on a steep kopje which he attacked with the Grenadiers; the Scots Guards and West Kent Regiment in support, moving through a burning veldt, smothered with smoke and driving flames, till night fell, the Boers still holding on to the kopje, from which, however, they retreated during the night towards Bethlehem. In the morning one of them came in, asking that a doctor might be sent to attend to Commandant De Villiers, who was badly wounded, and admitting that they had lost fifty killed and many wounded. On the 1st June the division marched east, to occupy a nek over which the road to General Brabant at Ficksburg lay, the Boers marching parallel; but our infantry outmarched them to gain the nek first and open communication with the Colonials, thus confining the Boers to the north-east corner of the Free State, in which their fighting force, with Mr Steyn, was gathered. Unfortunately the action near Senekal came too late to save the Yeomanry. On the 31st May the 13th battalion had to surrender to a very superior force near Lindley. On hearing the news Lord Roberts ordered Lord Methuen, who was one march on the Heilbron side of Kroonstad, to hasten to their assistance; but though he started half an hour after the receipt of the telegram, and marched forty-four miles in twenty-five hours, he was too late.

Lord Methuen and his compact force out of his way, Commandant De Wet, with 2000 Boers and six field-guns, slipped round between him and General Rundle to make the promised raid on the railway. From Bloemfontein to the Vaal is 200 miles, guarded by a division at the former place and a brigade at Kroonstad, about halfway. On the 7th June De Wet struck the railway at Roodeval, a station about twelve miles south of Kroonstad, where he came upon the 4th battalion Derbyshire Regiment in the act of detraining, who, after a severe fight, were taken prisoners and removed in all haste to Vrede. Ten miles of the railway on either side of Kroonstad was thoroughly destroyed and the telegraph cut, thus entirely isolating Lord Roberts in Pretoria. General Kelly-Kenny at Bloemfontein despatched strong reinforcements to Kroonstad, as the Boers still showed in force near Honingspruit. Information of their activity quickly reached Pretoria, and Lord Kitchener was sent off with such troops as could be spared to Vereeniging with orders to push on south and open communications with Lord Methuen, who was reported to be fight-

ing ten miles south of Heilbron. The two forces met on the evening of the 10th at Smaldeel station, about twenty miles north of the Rhenoster river, marching to it next day, when De Wet was defeated, his camp captured, and his troops scattered in all directions. General Knox at Kroonstad was ordered to press the Boer outposts, as it was believed that their strength was exaggerated. But just a week after their success at Roodeval 800 of them attacked a construction train with the Railway Pioneers on board near the Zand river, when they were beaten back after severe fighting, Major Seymour, a gallant American commanding the Pioneers, being killed; General Knox with a small force only just in time to drive them off with more loss.

In these raids the Boers found that they made excellent cavalry for a sudden dash at an unguarded point without the knowledge of the enemy: secrecy, dash, daring, and the aptitude for obtaining accurate information, all collect themselves to form a genius for a cavalry leader. Secrecy was in the Boer case easy to preserve, as they moved in a country entirely on their side and hostile to the other. They rode provided with the means to destroy rapidly and effectually; professional engineers might envy them—it was remarked by the troops advancing along the line from Bloemfontein how much the Boers had improved their system of destruction: in every case the demolition had been very thorough, probably the work of Hollanders, who had already been caught in the act of blowing up bridges and culverts. The damage to the Vet river bridge was such that all hope of a temporary reconstruction was impossible.

But with this phase of the campaign it is hard to be content—blundering has occurred, allowing the Boers to slip away without any one suspecting that they were slipping. The attack on Dewetsdorp was to have come off on the 22nd inst., when five infantry and three cavalry brigades, with more than seventy guns, were involved in dislodging the Boers from a "horseshoe position." The 3rd and 8th divisions of infantry close to, General Brabant and a brigade of infantry pushing up on the south, Ian Hamilton with 2000 mounted infantry and the 11th Division, followed by the cavalry of General French, from the north, were all kept waiting some days by 2500 Boers, who slipped out after all. The 22nd, the day of the battle that was to be, went by; the 23rd followed, quietly interrupted by an intermittent bombardment of the camp and the usual rifle-firing beyond, the Boers not seeming to realise the enormous strength of the force closing round them. The morning of the 24th broke without a single shot. Rundle swung round to the left pivoted on Chermside, the mounted brigade on the extreme outer flank, General French dropping down from the north to join in. Then the troops proceeded to turn

the enemy's left, moving silently; and turn it they did, but it was a rocky plateau which they turned. Single men crept up the hill, looked into the trenches, and found—nothing: the Boers had retreated swiftly during the night. They had good information of our movements and designs, and saw the impossibility of standing against the forces that were closing in on them; so they delayed, making much show of strength till the last minute. On the night of the 22nd they sent off their waggons; on the 23rd they made their attack on Wepener; and on the night of the 24th the men from there retreated to Ladybrand, the force we were watching at Dewetsdorp, acting as a covering-party, drawing off to Thabanchu. Was there no man of all those five infantry and three cavalry brigades, beside the gunners for seventy guns, sufficiently wide awake to hear 2500 Boers and their waggons steal away from that "horse-shoe" which they had watched for days past as a cat does a mouse? When at school the professors of military science taught us that before you retreat you light extra fires, fire more volleys, pull off your coats, and make a great show of improving your trenches, to impress the other side of your intention to hold on to them till the last. The Boers did all this, and we believed them—simple soldiers!

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But whenever the term mobility is used we jump at the conclusion that mounted infantry is meant. A little common-sense, however, will recognise that the mobility of an army depends upon something more than training any one of the arms composing it to go faster than it used to go. Strategic mobility is achieved by a quicker-moving transport—tactical, by increasing the power of rapid movement of the several arms: roughly, cavalry by better mounts and less weight on the saddle; artillery by increasing the weight and range of the projectile, without interfering with the manœuvring power of the carriage; infantry by feeding and exercise, to set up healthy action of body and limbs. Mounting does not increase its mobility; it only lends power of rapid locomotion to a section, to be used for a special purpose. And it is in the manufacture of this additional arm of the service that we have blundered. The cry in the street is, "Mount the infantry and they will go faster than those on the other side who are unmounted!" It is only a fraction of his infantry that a general can use when mounted; theirs is a special *rôle* to which they should be restricted; and we must remember this when we make them. Mounted infantry are not like Topsy, they don't grow: a dozen Tommies turned into a field with a dozen ponies will not turn out again as mounted infantry. Up to now the method of turning them out has been half-hearted, and therefore bad: they are no one's

the men that join the infantry are not quite sure at which end of a horse his head or his tail is. You may teach them to ride, but when they are in the saddle their energies will be engaged in remaining there: one tailor will slacken the pace of a score of men on horseback. To ask a hundred dislocated units to form a company is to ask a mob to do soldiers' work. It is cohesion that transforms mobs into armies; without association there will be no cohesion, and the army will remain a mob. If there is one reputation that has survived South Africa, it is that of our regiments, always the glory and the mainstay of the British army. Mounted infantry is a recognised branch of the army, and means must be found to provide a force possessing the advantages of the regimental system without wrecking other systems to procure it. A letter to the 'Times' says: "Convert the eight Rifle, two Scottish, and two Irish battalions into mounted infantry; teach them to ride, simplify the drill, cause them to devote special attention to rifle-shooting, and we should have a force of 12,000 mounted infantry, completely organised, and imbued with that strong *esprit de corps* which is one of the greatest factors in the field. And the wretched makeshift arrangements by which our infantry battalions are now robbed of some of their best officers and men as soon as fighting is in prospect would happily terminate."

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On the 9th June General Buller rode out to Majuba to hold a conference with the Boer commandants to arrange terms of surrender of Laing's Nek; but on their representation that they could not surrender without instructions from Pretoria, he agreed to delay his advance for three days,—a respite of which they took, probably, full advantage. When the time was up he sent the 10th infantry brigade with the South African Horse to seize Van Wyk Hill, ten miles north-west of Newcastle and south of the entrance to Botha's Pass, which order was carried out with slight resistance. Next day some heavy guns were got into position there, and on Inkwelo, a hill about the same distance north of the pass, thus commanding the entire entrance from either side. An attack followed, made by the 5th infantry division, on Spitz Kop, a hill commanding the entrance to the pass itself, and reported to be held by 2000 Boers: this was carried with great dash, and as it outflanked the Boer positions farther north they were forced to retire some twenty-six miles north-west. On the 9th instant the troops halted to allow the train to come up. On the following day General Hildyard came in touch with the Boers at Gans Vlei, ten miles north, large parties, amounting to about 3000, crossing over in retreat from Laing's Nek. The Irregular Cavalry, in front, attacked at once, holding them till reinforced by another squadron,

when the retreating Boers were driven back across the ridge with considerable loss. This action arrested their retreat, and helped on to their defeat next day. They were found in occupation of a high, unbroken range of hills over which the Volksrust road passes at Almond's Nek, the last defile intervening between our troops and Charlestown. A fierce struggle for its possession ensued, the brunt of the fighting falling on the 2nd battalion Dorsetshire regiment, who carried the Nek at the point of the bayonet, and on the 3rd cavalry brigade, who were heavily attacked from the very broken country on the right; the Boers retreating to evacuate Laing's Nek and Majuba during the night, and allowing the passage of the 2nd Division, from Ingogo, across on the following day. Thus by a judicious turning movement the historic pass, with its miles of trenches, schanzes, emplacements, and what not, passed into our hands with comparatively little loss. General Buller cleverly outwitted their defenders by making a show of his intention to operate against their left; then, masking their front by a well-simulated feint, making rapidly with all his force for their right, where he was not expected.

The highest praise is due to him for his application of tactics to the enemy's habits of thought and to the characteristics of the ground. He made a flank march of fifty miles, over country broken and difficult everywhere, against a large force of the enemy, which he fought four times, to succeed in clearing Natal of the Boers with a loss of 30 killed and 130 wounded. A story went the round of the newspapers that his plan was helped by Sir Evelyn Wood, who is said to have told Joubert, at the memorable conference after Majuba, that if the war had continued it was his intention to push him out of Laing's Nek by a turning movement to the east—the plan actually intended at the time being to discard tactics altogether, as Sir Evelyn knew that the defence rested entirely on rifle-fire without the assistance of artillery, and to gallop three cavalry regiments up the road leading across the Nek, when, though we should have lost some men, it would have been won, the Boers of that day having a wholesome dread of attacking cavalry.

On reaching Volksrust the Natal column emerged once again, after six months among the mountains, into the pleasant sunlight. In front was a shallow valley bordered by slopes rising into low ridges—always trending apart, till Paarde Kop stands up on the west, the last of the kopjes on the road to Pretoria; farther back, on either hand, the peaks of the Drakensberg, fading, to disappear in the far distance; beyond, the boundless veldt, lonely land and space.

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The veldt—what memories the word calls up! The vast silence of its sweet savagery; the voice of the wind that

sweeps its welcome to us over the grass, stems that wave and curtsey to it, bustling along to fill us with quick life. All else is still—all sounds forgotten—boundless space to fling out your arms in ecstasy of freedom; your pony and yourself the only life—no, there is something living out beyond and everywhere. It is feeding-time; you off-saddle on the crest of a green billow, knee-halter the pony and start him off to feed; you do the same. Nothing across that sea of swells, stilled into green death by the magic of the land,—nothing? Close beside you stands a springbok, taper and graceful: a glance, and it springs away, an indiarubber sprite, hardly bending the grass tops which yonder have bunched round a walking-stick, the handle a bird's head, that turns to keep an eye on you—a *paauw*. Out of its burrow creeps an ant-bear, flat-tailed and shaggy, to turn its face up and blink after the darkness of its hole; and postures, pitching somersaults in sheer delight to be alive. Three vultures squat by a carcass in the hollow by the spruit, a comrade soaring overhead, a speck against the sky. The veldt lifeless!—when a thousand cities round you teem with working life—the population of an empire under each cupola of sun-baked mud—white ants innumerable. Those blocks of stone, small and big, flung to make a kopje, the crannies ablaze with reds and golds of the tritomas, rocketing; sun-shades for the squirrels to lie and pant under. In the *vlei* the cranes are standing in the shallows; farther in, flamingoes, up to their knees, in conclave, their heads, clumsy and solemn, all with one eye upon you; then the flock rise and the still water catches the reflections of the circles that they draw against the sky—now snow, now pink. Beyond, a salt lake, a sheet of silver spread in the valley; a ripple and three dots push through, and the eyes that are in them, seeing safety, grow larger as the great beast their owner rolls ashore; his footsteps, squelching the swamp into round pools, a foot or more across, marking the path of Behemoth. A whir of wings; it is bedtime for the water-birds—ducks, geese, and swans—each settle with much language, select in their own circle, and prune, and quack, and go to sleep. There is a tin store to which a troop of Kaffir girls are winding, chattering merrily, their nut-brown bodies, following the other, with a bead to cover them. That *kloof* fringed with cactus bushes ends in a cliff, grey and precipitous, trellised with creepers; and looking up you feel you are not alone,—some one is there, like unseen tenants in an empty house—just a little creepy! The leaves rustle and a ball pushes out, high up—then a pair of eyes that sparkle in a child's brown face watching you. You know the trick—a chunk of tobacco held up and a man comes out; halting, shaggy hair, and nothing else; a dweller in the caves. Then his arm flings up. "Inkos!" You nod, and he is

at your side: you question him. "Intombie?" A nod; "Muchla Intombie[1]—bacco?" Another nod, and he is off to the creepers, now instinct with a hushed chatter of voices, to come out again dragging a nut-brown girl, shrinking and graceful, maidenly conscious, with perhaps a bead, more likely not; her open palm held up for "bacco," to disappear with her treasure, like a flash, behind the creepers. Everywhere the ant-heaps and, in between, those memories, reputations made or lost, sleeping under the veldt. How they throng! — trooping back. Colley—ardent and brave—who tried the impossible; beloved by all, most by that tattered group that stood beside him lying under the shadow of that accursed hill. We did not listen to the whisper of the veldt telling that 200,000 Englishmen were coming to avenge our comrade. Trooper Hall, only a Colonial, who gave his life to save us outside Standerton; the old people in Australia sit and gaze at a scrap of paper, framed, which tells them of their boy's gallantry and of the Cross he earned. Wilkinson, at the Ingogo, carrying comforts to the wounded—drowned and dead. Anstruther and his regiment, murdered with him at Bronkhorst Spruit—sad memories that the veldt keeps in its silent hold.

[1] "Are there any girls?" "Yes, pretty girls."

DISTRACTED CHINA.

FOR years it has been a commonplace of Oriental politics that China is hastening to its ruin, and since the days of the T'aip'ing rebellion there have always been in our midst prophets of evil who have warned us that the days of the empire are numbered. It cannot be denied that at the present moment there are outward and palpable signs which might, if counter tokens were ignored, be held to point to that most undesirable consummation. The political atmosphere is full of "treasons, stratagems, and spoils," and the several factions into which the empire is divided are busy marshalling their forces and crossing their swords in action. But threatened States live long, and we have ever before us the example of the Sick Man in Europe, whose empire has long known no other than the parlous state in which China now finds itself. But with that vitality which belongs to rickety States, Turkey has survived all dangers and vicissitudes, and the Sultan, who was lately a byword of scorn, has within the last year gained distinction as the host and entertainer of one of the most powerful sovereigns in Europe. Nor can it be said to have been from any wisdom on the part of her rulers that Turkey had been thus saved from destruction and promoted to honour. On the contrary, it is obvious that her fortunate position is entirely due to the jealous rivalry which consumes the European States at the very mention of the possible collapse and consequent partition of the empire.

The same fortunate conjunction of circumstances is now operating in the East for the maintenance of the integrity of China, and we believe that the Powers which are ready to support that ancient State are stronger than those which are against her; and that, unless some most unforeseen circumstances arise, Kwang-hsü's successor will enjoy an undiminished inheritance. Writers and politicians have long pointed the finger of scorn, and with justice, at the political ignorance and supreme weakness which characterise the present Government of China. But it is this weakness which is her strength; and though the ignorance of her rulers is supreme, it is partly counterbalanced by a cunning trafficking in politics which embraces what the members of the Tsungli Yamên are good enough to call their policy.

It is a patent fact that in one sense the worst enemies which the dynasty possesses are those of its own household. And more especially is this true at the present time, when the peril which is most imminent is the threatening attitude of the Boxers, or, to give them their more correct and certainly more euphemistic title, the "Fists of Righteous Harmony." This

confederation, which now numbers some millions, would probably have pursued an obscure and ignominious career had not the light of imperial favour caused it to blossom out into a large and dangerous association. It is difficult to divine the principles which guided the Dowager-Empress to the choice of this society as her weapon. Its origin was insignificant, and its headquarters—the province of Shantung—is at a considerable distance from the metropolis. It may be that the vigorous hostility which the members showed towards foreigners generally entitled them to recognition at her hands; or it may be that she determined to use them as a counterblast to the German occupation of Kiaochow. But, however that may be, the Emperor's leaning towards reform, and the consequences which followed from the ill-considered schemes which he adopted, have stamped on the Regent's mind an indelible impression. She sees in reform the abrupt overthrow of the present system of government, the downfall of the less intellectual Manchu before the quicker-witted Chinese, and, last but not least, her own deposition.

It must be confessed that, having only such consequences of reform as the Emperor's actions supplied for her object-lesson, there is something to be said for this attitude. The wholesale dismissal of officials of the first rank, the abolition of offices, and the confiscation of temples and monasteries which marked the short period when K'ang Yuwei had the ear of his imperial master, were enough to shock her hyper-conservative principles. In her opinion there could be no question as to the virulence of the poison, and there could be no two opinions as to its source. The influence of foreigners was everywhere observable, and many of the reformers were notoriously Christians. These, then, were the roots of the mischief, and it has been to compass the destruction of these two parents of evil that she has devoted her energies since the *coup d'état*.

Her first measure — and it was taken with no faltering steps—was to restore to power the hardened reactionaries whom the Emperor in his new zeal had deprived of office. It will be remembered that among the reforms instituted by Kwang-hsü was a law conferring on all subjects the right of memorialising the throne. Acting on this permission, a certain secretary of the Board of Rites handed to his superiors a memorial which he had drawn up advocating certain reforms. In their wisdom the presidents and vice-presidents refused to present the paper, on the grounds that its contents were revolutionary (everything which is not sanctioned by Confucius is revolutionary in the eyes of the orthodox Mandarins), and urged him to revise his recommendations. This he stoutly refused to do, and thereupon the Manchu president of the Board denounced him as a dangerous character, and recommended that he should be cashiered. But the president had reckoned without his host, and to his

infinite astonishment the Emperor, instead of adopting his views, summarily dismissed him and his colleagues with contumely for disobedience to the imperial command.

Thunderstruck and confounded, the deposed potentates went off straight to the Empress's palace, which had of late become a veritable cave of Adullam, and poured their tale of woe into her sympathetic ears. With ready zeal she adopted their cause, and signalised her return to power by restoring them to office, and by heaping honours on their heads. The president was promoted over the Court of Censors, and was granted the distinguished honour of being allowed to ride within the precincts of that imperial holy of holies, the Forbidden City. A like distinction was conferred on one of the vice-presidents, who was also appointed viceroy of the province of Fuhkien; and rewards of less note were showered on all those who had earned her gratitude by upholding tradition in defiance of the command of the Emperor.

One other obstructive official had a still more exciting experience of the sharp changes of fortune. The Viceroy Junglu had been denounced to the Emperor as one who was hopelessly anti-reform, and as this at the moment was a capital offence, Yuan Shihkai, formerly Chinese Resident in Korea, was sent with a special edict and a sharp sword to behead him. But, for some reason, the heart of the messenger of death misgave him, and instead of cutting off the offending viceroy's head, he paid him a formal visit, and communicated to him the stringent measure which he had been ordered to carry out. Not unnaturally the viceroy took alarm, and hurried off with a small escort to the same goal to which the cashiered officers of the Board of Rites had betaken themselves. There he found the same comfort as had been graciously given to them, and met with a sufficient compensation for the loss of his viceregal position in the appointment of Generalissimo of the armies of Chihli and of the northern fleet, "with supreme command, and with the power of life and death."

These are the men who, having escaped death and dishonour, are now, with others like-minded with themselves, directing the policy of the empire. It is not to be expected that, after such experiences as these, they should be anything but bitterly hostile to reforms of every kind. Hence when the Boxers appeared on the scene they bade them heartily welcome, and as any stick was good enough to beat foreigners and reformers with, they combined with the Empress in taking these banditti under their protection. It is hardly possible that they could have foreseen the full and rapid effect of their ill-considered action. With marvellous rapidity the movement has spread, fed by plunder, until now its ragged regiments are to be found from almost one end of the empire to the other. But they are a rabble, they are badly armed, and their organisation is of the rudest description. A single

English regiment would probably scatter any force that they could put into the field. And thus, though they represent a real danger to isolated individuals and such small communities as are scattered over the interior of the country, they are powerless to do more than mischief against any organised forces at the treaty ports.

Of themselves they can do very little except rob and pillage, but the real peril lies in the contingency that the well-armed troops of northern China may join their ranks. There is a very slight dividing line between a Chinese soldier and a brigand, and a very small inducement would be required to make the followers of Tung Fuhsiang into hardened Boxers. In all movements of this sort the men of action, who at first represent the extreme section, are passed and left behind by leaders of still more pronounced views; and in this, as in the present case, lies the prospect of a hopeful issue. Jung-lu, after his escape from the supreme peril which threatened him, was regarded as the advance-guard of the reactionary forces, and for a time he justified the idea, being looked upon by his followers as a respectable representative of extreme measures. But there were forces in the background which forbade the possibility of any halting-place short of anarchy, and with the appearance on the scene of Kang Yi and Tung Fuhsiang, Jung-lu was relegated to the position of a half-hearted supporter of a moderate policy. Being in command of a large force of troops, and being intimately associated with Prince Ching, who until yesterday was the President of the Tsungli Yamên, he was not, however, a man who could be treated as a nonentity, and his advice had weight with his imperial mistress, when it suited that imperious lady to adopt it, and only then. When the question of the trial of the six reformers came up for discussion, he was in favour of a judicial examination into the charges brought against them. But neither justice nor mercy are qualities which appeal in any way to his opponents, and Kang Yi himself carried an imperial order for instant execution, which sent to death the six martyrs to reform without the semblance of a trial.

As it was then, so now the same process is going on. It would almost seem as though Kang Yi's views had ceased to satisfy the extreme party, and that Tung Fuhsiang had usurped the place which he used to occupy. This man is a truculent ruffian, without any redeeming quality to which his best friends can point. He is supremely ignorant, a pretentious swashbuckler, and a confirmed anti-reformer. Unfortunately he has lately gained credit in the field by suppressing a Mohammedan rebellion in Kansu, when his methods in moments of victory were those of a common butcher. Flushed with victory and crowned with honours, he has been summoned, at the head of his troops, to the neighbourhood of Peking; and as a sign of his ascendancy it may be noted that it was he,

and not Jung-lu, who was appointed to escort the Emperor and Dowager-Empress on their return from the Summer Palace to Peking a few days ago.

Matters have thus reached a point where a cleavage has occurred in the ranks of the extreme party. The dismissal of Prince Ching from his post at the Tsungli Yamên has lately emphasised the division, and has added a powerful supporter to Jung-lu's following. The two forces are now practically ranged in opposition to each other, and it requires but the smallest inducement to make them fly at each other's throats. There is no consideration that moves Orientals to take action more certainly than the belief that they are strongly supported, and if the European Powers were, even at this eleventh hour, to take a strong line and to remove the Dowager-Empress from the scenes of her present activity, the majority of the leaders of opinion, with the exception of those who are irrevocably committed, would range themselves on the side of the young Emperor. The appeal would be to their loyalty, not to their disloyalty, and all those natives who have watched the course of events, especially since the Japanese war, and have recognised the disastrous consequences of the policy which the Empress represents, would give in their adhesion to the throne. Although patriotism, in our sense of the word, is almost unknown in China, a deep sentiment of regard and veneration attaches to the person of the Son of Heaven, and when this feeling coincides with the interests of peace and plenty, it is certain to become dominant.

It is a mistake to suppose that the views of such men as Kang Yi and Tung Fuhsiang are generally adopted by the educated classes. A vast amount of Western knowledge has of late been widely diffused throughout the empire, and though it by no means follows that those who have drunk at this spring of wisdom have become pro-foreign in their opinions, — even K'ang Yuwei is by no means an ardent pro-foreigner, — they have learnt to see that the old line of policy which the Empress and her satellites would perpetuate, and which, as their observation has told them, reduced their armies to rabbles and their fleets to impotence, can bring nothing but disaster on the empire. Imbued with this idea, an appeal to their loyalty, and especially an appeal which is likely to win, would find a ready response.

It would be quite within the range of practical politics to remove the Dowager-Empress to a region sufficiently remote to prevent the possibility of any further political intrigues on her part, and the Emperor might be encouraged to call to his counsels such men as Prince Ching, Jung-lu, Chang Chih-tung, Liu K'uni, and others. The instalment of these men, far from outraging the feelings of the educated classes, would be welcomed by them as a guarantee that at least an attempt was being made to establish order in place of chaos, and to

consolidate the empire instead of wasting its strength. They would recognise that no unworthy truckling to foreigners would be possible under such an administration, and they would at the same time feel assured that all their best interests would be safeguarded. At the present moment the people are swayed, to some extent unwillingly, by Tung Fuhsiang and his colleagues; but if once the Emperor were placed in a position to get rid of the evil counsellors who now surround his throne, and to place the administration of affairs in the hands of competent men, the country would rally to him, and the empire would arise all the stronger and better for the ordeal through which it is now passing.

June 21, 1900.

Since the above was put into type, events in China have been marching apace. The contingency foreshadowed in the preceding pages, that the imperial troops might combine with the Boxers, has become a fact, and by firing on the allied fleets at Taku, the Dowager-Empress has practically declared war against Europe and civilisation. To all those who are unaware of the gross ignorance and dense stupidity, so far as foreign affairs are concerned, which characterise the ordinary conduct of the Chinese Government, this last act must appear astounding in its folly. But to close observers it seems to follow in the usual course. All European complications with China have been inaugurated by similar acts of violence, and by a complete disregard, due to ignorance, of the forces which the State may be ranging against itself. After a few engagements, in which the utter incapacity of the Chinese to meet Europeans in the field will be demonstrated, negotiations for peace will be opened, and the Mandarins will strive, by degrading the warlike officials whose actions they have prompted, and by utilising the offices of Li Hung-chang or some other crafty negotiator, to rob the foreigners of as much of the just prizes of victory as is possible. It appears likely that this stage in the dispute is already approaching, and it is to be hoped that the European diplomatists, warned by past experiences, will rather take as their models the Japanese negotiators of the treaty of Shimonoseki than the past pliable framers of British Conventions.

A satisfactory feature in the situation is the attitude of the two great Viceroys on the Yang-tsze Kiang mentioned above, Chang Chih-tung and Liu K'uni. These officials have had the courage and wisdom to denounce the Boxers, and to call on all well-disposed subjects of the throne to rally to the cause of law and order. It is on such men as these that the best hopes of the empire depend.

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HOW WE ESCAPED FROM PRETORIA.

BY

CAPTAIN AYLMER HALDANE, D.S.O.,

2ND BATT. GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

As those of my readers who chanced to see the brief accounts of our escape from Pretoria which have appeared in the English and other papers may possibly observe some slight discrepancy between those narratives and the one in the following pages, I take this opportunity of explaining the cause thereof. In the press account I was unable to take the public entirely into my confidence, since on the night of the seventh day after leaving Pretoria we met with very material assistance from our own countrymen, the fact of which could in no way be disclosed without placing the lives and property of those who unhesitatingly risked both in the most imminent peril. Until the war approached a successful termination I could not give a full and complete account of our adventures, and at the same time tender our heartfelt thanks to those without whose timely aid we should have had the greatest difficulty in reaching the Portuguese frontier.

LADYSMITH, *May* 1900.

I.—CHIEVELEY TO PRETORIA.

After the fight of the 21st October at Elandslaagte I was sent to Pietermaritzburg together with other wounded, there to be cared for and made fit to resume my place at the front. But during the last days of October and the first

of November events rapidly developed; and Ladysmith becoming surrounded by the Boer main army, I found myself cut off from my regiment, which formed part of the beleaguered garrison. As soon as I could walk I obtained permission to proceed to Estcourt, the farthest point north held by the relieving force, whence I hoped to have an opportunity of passing through the Boer lines with despatches and so rejoin my regiment. At Estcourt I was attached for duty to the 2nd battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, one of those battalions which had taken part in the dashing capture of Talana Hill and the retreat to Ladysmith, whence it had been sent to Colenso and later to its present quarters.

Several days passed unbroken by any event worth recording. Day after day, generally at the same hour, the armoured train, or (as it was named by the men in camp) "Wilson's death-trap," used to press forth unattended beyond the line of outposts, heralding, by agonised gasps and puffs, and clouds of smoke and steam, its advent to the far-sighted, long-hearing Boer. Daily, too, did it return in safety to the siding whence it had sallied forth at daybreak on its fruitless mission. How relieved the occupants looked when they climbed over its plated sides and congratulated themselves that their turn to form the freight of this moribund engine of war would not come round again for at least some days!

Mine, alas! arrived on the 15th of November.

On the preceding day there had been an alarm in camp. Corps stood to their arms and forthwith occupied the various defences and localities that they were detailed to hold. That night I received orders to reconnoitre on the following day with the armoured train.

I am not going to recount the events of that day, which already have been portrayed by an abler pen than mine. I will take up the tale at the point where I became a captive in the hands of the Boers—for it is my purpose in these pages to treat mainly of my captivity and escape, not to launch into matters to which full justice already has been done.

The morning of my capture —which took place at 8.50 A.M. after defending the armoured train for an hour and a half— was raw and damp: mist hung heavily on the surrounding hills, and a small drizzling rain which from time to time exerted itself until it attained to the magnitude of a shower rapidly penetrated our garments, and added to the misery and discomfort of our unenviable position. Our escort politely begged us not to hurry, saying that there was lots of time, and that although they were unable themselves to spare us either food or clothing, we should find on reaching Pretoria all we required—nay, even that there we should be provided with the usual games with which the British officer delights to exercise himself. From their description, all that could delight the heart of man or prisoner awaited us in the Boer capital. No doubt they meant kindly, very kindly; but

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Meanwhile, trudging along the muddy veldt road, we came upon a number of Boers who were cleaning their rifles after being engaged with us, and with them was a party of Staats Artillery officers. With one of the latter, the officer in command, who was neatly dressed in cord coat and breeches, faced with blue, I had some conversation. He began by asking me why we had not surrendered at once, and congratulating us on the defence of the train, but lamenting that his guns had not been better laid, in which case, according to his reckoning, our shrift would have been a short one. He added that his three heavy guns had each fired an average of thirty rounds, and that (as we well knew) he had employed a Vickers-Maxim gun against us, a machine which has since received the *sobriquet* of "Pom-pom." Passing on from here, we were ushered into the midst of the camp of a large commando, where Churchill's papers were examined, and taken to General Joubert, whom, I regret to say, we were not allowed to see; and great excitement was displayed on its becoming known that the real live son of a lord was amongst the prisoners. It was plain to me now that we were in the thick of a strong force which was on its way southwards. According to my own computation, I should have put down the numbers seen as from 3000 to 4000 men; but the Boers themselves stated that there were 6500.

Somewhat weary after a tramp of sixteen miles, and further fatigued by the exhausting experience of the morning, we at length came within sight of the village of Colenso. It presented every appearance of some unusual condition of affairs,—windows smashed, doors unhinged, furniture and crockery scattered broadcast over the grass-grown streets—in short, every indication of a hostile occupation.

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Night was now falling, and we were hurried on to a large goods-shed contiguous to the main platform of the insignificant railway-station. We were directed to accept this as our lodging for the night, and expectations were held out that shortly an ox would be killed, and we should have our share of what promised to be a somewhat tough and untoothsome meal. This promise was not long in the fulfilment. The beast of burden was slain, and almost as soon as the proverbial Indian dâk-bungalow chicken finds its way from the compound to the pot, we were busily engaged in cooking scraps of meat on sticks held over a fire, and looking forward to enjoying what are called in the East *kababs*. The wind was blowing, and the rain falling, as we crouched round the wood fires, each and all intent on the rapid preparation of our frugal meal. The warmth of the burning sticks and the discomfort of burnt fingers rapidly

of November events rapidly developed; and Ladysmith becoming surrounded by the Boer main army, I found myself cut off from my regiment, which formed part of the beleaguered garrison. As soon as I could walk I obtained permission to proceed to Estcourt, the farthest point north held by the relieving force, whence I hoped to have an opportunity of passing through the Boer lines with despatches and so rejoin my regiment. At Estcourt I was attached for duty to the 2nd battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, one of those battalions which had taken part in the dashing capture of Talana Hill and the retreat to Ladysmith, whence it had been sent to Colenso and later to its present quarters.

Several days passed unbroken by any event worth recording. Day after day, generally at the same hour, the armoured train, or (as it was named by the men in camp) "Wilson's death-trap," used to press forth unattended beyond the line of outposts, heralding, by agonised gasps and puffs, and clouds of smoke and steam, its advent to the far-sighted, long-hearing Boer. Daily, too, did it return in safety to the siding whence it had sallied forth at daybreak on its fruitless mission. How relieved the occupants looked when they climbed over its plated sides and congratulated themselves that their turn to form the freight of this moribund engine of war would not come round again for at least some days!

Mine, alas! arrived on the 15th of November.

On the preceding day there had been an alarm in camp. Corps stood to their arms and forthwith occupied the various defences and localities that they were detailed to hold. That night I received orders to reconnoitre on the following day with the armoured train.

I am not going to recount the events of that day, which already have been portrayed by an abler pen than mine. I will take up the tale at the point where I became a captive in the hands of the Boers—for it is my purpose in these pages to treat mainly of my captivity and escape, not to launch into matters to which full justice already has been done.

The morning of my capture —which took place at 8.50 A.M. after defending the armoured train for an hour and a half— was raw and damp: mist hung heavily on the surrounding hills, and a small drizzling rain which from time to time exerted itself until it attained to the magnitude of a shower rapidly penetrated our garments, and added to the misery and discomfort of our unenviable position. Our escort politely begged us not to hurry, saying that there was lots of time, and that although they were unable themselves to spare us either food or clothing, we should find on reaching Pretoria all we required—nay, even that there we should be provided with the usual games with which the British officer delights to exercise himself. From their description, all that could delight the heart of man or prisoner awaited us in the Boer capital. No doubt they meant kindly, very kindly; but

no promised land, no vista of untold delight, as seen through our eyes at that moment, could have made one's pulse beat even a shade faster. Some deep and dreary dungeon, or, still more so, an *oubliette*, seemed consonant with my feelings.

Meanwhile, trudging along the muddy veldt road, we came upon a number of Boers who were cleaning their rifles after being engaged with us, and with them was a party of Staats Artillery officers. With one of the latter, the officer in command, who was neatly dressed in cord coat and breeches, faced with blue, I had some conversation. He began by asking me why we had not surrendered at once, and congratulating us on the defence of the train, but lamenting that his guns had not been better laid, in which case, according to his reckoning, our shrift would have been a short one. He added that his three heavy guns had each fired an average of thirty rounds, and that (as we well knew) he had employed a Vickers-Maxim gun against us, a machine which has since received the *sobriquet* of "Pom-pom." Passing on from here, we were ushered into the midst of the camp of a large commando, where Churchill's papers were examined, and taken to General Joubert, whom, I regret to say, we were not allowed to see; and great excitement was displayed on its becoming known that the real live son of a lord was amongst the prisoners. It was plain to me now that we were in the thick of a strong force which was on its way southwards. According to my own computation, I should have put down the numbers seen as from 3000 to 4000 men; but the Boers themselves stated that there were 6500.

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did their share in appeasing our hunger, and we betook ourselves to our temporary prison, where, selecting a corner apart from the men, we made a bed by spreading on the concrete floor the contents of some compressed forage bales. Burying ourselves in the short dry hay, we huddled close together, endeavouring thereby to retain such warmth as still remained in our weary limbs.

The building in which we were congregated contained but one door and a small skylight in the corrugated iron roof. A glance round on first entering it had raised hopes of a possible escape during the night, which as regards climatic conditions was singularly favourable; but though, when I look back on this lost chance, it seems like child's play compared with the difficulties which later opportunities presented, to our weary bodies and fagged-out brains it appeared to offer little chance of success, and we were only too glad to procrastinate, and to console ourselves with the thought that on the night of the morrow we should be within range of the guns of Ladysmith, and possibly in a far better position to give our captors the slip.

Stuffiness reigned supreme, the only door of the building being fast closed by the guard, who, no doubt, considered that we within were not unenviably situated compared with those without. Outside, the pitter-patter of the rain resounded monotonously on the metal roof. Inside, some fifty mortals lay, for the most part, wrapped in heavy slumber, no sound save the rhythmic snore of some weary warrior, or the unintelligible jargon from the lips of some sleeper busy in his dreams, breaking in upon the profound silence. But, hark! what means that sound of deep and manly voices, now swelling, now dying away, without, in the cheerless night!

For a moment one almost forgot where one was — amid the pious God-fearing Boers. We strain the ear and soon distinguish the tune of the "Old Hundredth," followed again by other and familiar chants. Such, indeed, is the custom of the enemy. Nightly, in every camp, the commandant assembles all his men whom the call of duty does not take elsewhere, and before retiring to rest a short time is devoted to prayer and praise. Honesty compels me to show the reverse of this picture. These very men, who are almost as full of apt texts as the great Cromwell's Ironsides, are far from acting up to the high religious sentiments that they profess. They are singularly untruthful, eminently boastful, lamentably immoral, and their ideas of *meum* and *tuum* would do credit to a London pickpocket. My statement regarding their characteristics may seem sweeping; nevertheless it is true, and "Never trust a Dutchman" is a byword among the British in South Africa.

But the Boers, who here have no enemy immediately in front of them, and consist solely of our escort, have now retired to rest, and we turn over and hope for morning.

At length it dawns, and we

are told to bestir ourselves and prepare for the road. Munching a cold *kabab*, washed down by a draught of water from the engine-pump, we follow our captors in melancholy procession to the banks of the river. Here we are invited to wade across — an unnecessary proceeding, considering the close proximity of the foot-bridge; but the Tugela river before the rains is only a paltry obstacle, and our company is soon assembled on the farther bank. We plod along steadily and somewhat silently, until we reach the summit of the hill on which is a Boer post overlooking Pieter's station. Here we halt, and make short work of a tin of bully beef which some kindly rustic presents to us.

Away to the north-west we can clearly distinguish the captive balloon hovering like some strange phantom of mythology over what assuredly must be Ladysmith. Ever and anon the deep boom of the Boer great gun reaches our ears, followed by the responsive and angry roar of our Naval Artillery. Sometimes a great cloud of white smoke discloses to us where Long Tom lies so cunningly hid. We descend the rocky side of the hill, and crossing the railway strike a much-worn waggon-track, which we are told leads beyond the Klip river to our night's halting-place. A couple of miles over a grassy plain brings us to the drift, a fairly deep one, reaching nearly to our waists. Over we go, with difficulty keeping our feet on the slippery stones, and a short half-hour brings us to the end of that day's tramp.

Seating ourselves under the welcome shade of a stunted oak, we are soon surrounded by every living soul from the adjacent camp, which in our eyes more resembles a gypsy settlement than a military post. The old commandant, Davel, soon appeared on the scene, and in broken English invited us to share his tent, secure from the sun's rays, which had become oppressive. We acquiesce, and following him to the brow of the hill, enter the welcome shade he proffers.

I have the most vivid and lasting recollection of the attention and kindness which this old Dutch farmer lavished upon us. Throughout the journey to the Boer metropolis we met with nothing but the greatest consideration; but this old commander not only gave us of the best he could,—and at that time the Boer commissariat arrangements were in their infancy,—but insisted on lending us some of his blankets, provided us with candles, and with his own hands brought us coffee on the following morning. He presented Churchill with a blanket, and we really felt quite sorry to leave his camp.

We passed many hours in his tent, which seemed to be the focus of movement in the camp. All who came to the post he commanded seemed to drop in, give him the time of day, and, after a few minutes' conversation, vanish. During the afternoon two nephews of General Joubert belonging to the Staats Artillery returned to the camp from their tour of duty on Long Tom, and pressed on us the contents of their

cigarette-cases. Churchill, needless to say, afforded all the greatest source of interest. With much ability, coupled with quick repartee, he defended the justice of the war; but it struck me that these plain-spoken, ignorant farmers, who based their arguments on the capitalists and Mr Chamberlain, declaring that but for these two ruling factors matters would never have come to blows, somewhat shook his faith, and certainly gained his sympathy. Knowing nothing of the Boers personally, beyond an experience of twenty-four hours, I for the time being dismissed from my thoughts the overwhelming importance of the question of British supremacy in South Africa, and felt inclined to sympathise with these rude tillers of the soil in their plaint that the arbitrament of arms had been forced upon them. A few months have made it clear to me how insidiously the country Boer has been taught to believe as gospel those specious arguments which are everywhere on the tip of his tongue. He firmly believes that the war is one of capitalists, and that we wish to occupy his country,—and perhaps he is not very wide of the mark now. Had this simple-minded agriculturist known the true state of affairs, I question greatly whether even President Kruger, backed by the Psalms of David, could have kept him in the field for half as many months as he has. Leave the country Boer to himself, and there is plenty of room for him. Let him lead the pastoral existence for which alone he is suited, let him live, die, and be buried, as is his custom, on his own farm, and I take leave to think that to him it is not a matter of stupendous importance whether he be under the Dutch flag or the English. I have been told by those who have a good claim to know that no mean proportion of the rural population will welcome our advent, which is dreaded solely by the rapacious officials and overbearing underlings of the most corrupt and venal State of the latter days.

But I have wandered far afield.

Later in the day a member of the Honourable Artillery Company, an Irishman, paid us a visit, and told us that he formed one of the gun-crew serving Long Tom on Umbulwana Hill, and that being a burgher of the Transvaal he had been forced to take up arms for his adopted country. He assured us that the naval guns in Ladysmith, though they made good practice, had not yet succeeded in searching out the weapon which he and others served. Long Tom, it seems, was cunningly hidden in a bomb-proof casemate, built of sand-bags, that protected both him and his attendants. As this was early in the history of the siege, we suggested that when his turn came round for laying the gun, he would do well to direct the sights so that the projectile might fall where it would do no harm. He chaffingly consented, and three weeks later, being granted short leave of absence, paid us a visit, bringing with him a large quantity of cigarettes.

The natural question, "When do you mean to take Ladysmith?" being put, all with one accord affirmed, with the utmost confidence, that they would do so shortly, but that they were in no violent hurry to carry out the operation. *Delenda est Carthago* was easier said than done, and here it never passed beyond the stage of threat. On my pointing out to the anxious listeners that in their place we should not sit down and rest contented with looking at it, hoping the wall would come to us and so save our having to go to the wall like Mahomet, they had a reply ready to hand. "Were the commandant-general" (meaning General Joubert), one of them insubordinately answered, "to order me to go and attack Ladysmith to-morrow, I should refuse point-blank, and my comrades would do likewise: most of us have wives and children, and we don't want to be killed!" To meet the case, some one suggested that the young unmarried men might be suitably employed in the assault; but this did not appear to find favour with any young man present.

Daybreak saw us once more afoot and wending our way towards the Modder Spruit, the men following in our wake. We were told that when we reached the railway-station at that place, we should find a train waiting to take us to Pretoria, and also that we should obtain some food, which some of us sorely needed. We reached the station at 9.30 A.M., and shortly after were invited to enter a first-class carriage, the men being accommodated with covered trucks. Here our party was augmented by the arrival of Sergeant A. Brockie, Imperial Light Horse, who had been captured whilst swimming the Klip river on the previous morning, on his way back to Ladysmith from a scouting expedition through the Boer camps. He whispered to me that he had given out to his captors that he was a lieutenant in the Natal Carabineers, and we undertook to support his deception. His object in this misrepresentation, to further which he had removed his regimental badges from his slouch hat and his shoulder-straps, was to avoid being lodged in Pretoria jail, whence escape would have been no easy matter. He knew that such would be his fate should it transpire to what corps he actually belonged, for the members of the Imperial Light Horse are held in peculiar aversion by the Boers. The reason is not far to seek. The majority of those serving in this corps, which has so greatly distinguished itself during the war, are residents of Johannesburg, and many had taken a prominent part in the Jameson raid, some actually having served on the Reform Committee.

Before leaving this station we met with the only insulting language experienced throughout our journey, and this from an Irishman. I was glad to observe that the men of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers treated him with a silent scorn which his cowardly conduct merited.

By way of escort we were provided with two Boers, who

travelled in the carriage as far as Volksrust, where they were relieved by two others. The younger of the two former confided to me, with youthful glee, that he had fired over one hundred rounds at us on the 15th, and had got a week's leave to visit his *vrouw;* while his elder comrade, who spoke but little English, and resembled somewhat a Scottish gamekeeper, was described to us as the man who put the stone on the line which was the cause of the derailment of the armoured train. He had been awarded a fortnight's leave for his successful feat, and not some costly war decoration.

We passed many trains bearing living freight of men and horses to the front, and at every station on the line numbers of people of both sexes crowded round the carriage windows, some expressing disappointment to find that I was not arrayed in the garb of old Gaul. Fat and forward *vrouws* intimated to us that they would like to be the happy possessors, and no doubt wearers, of our regimental buttons and badges; but we were ungallant enough to repel their unwelcome advances.

At length we came in view of the solid mass presented by Majuba Hill,—for me a spot of the greatest interest, my regiment having left on the top, in the action of the 27th February 1881, ninety-six killed and wounded out of one hundred and twenty. I had never thought to see this hill in this fashion, and I mentally registered a vow that I should yet live to gaze at it, going northwards with my regiment. Through the tunnel which pierces Laing's Nek there was an opportunity to spring forth from the window, like Charles Peace the burglar, and make for the open veldt, but we were now full a hundred miles from Ladysmith, the country between us and it infested with Boers, and ourselves clad in uniform.

At Volksrust, the first station inside the Transvaal border, our escort was changed, and an inspector of police having joined us, Sergeant Brockie was subjected to a close examination, with a view to find out whether he had resided long in Johannesburg, and if he were a burgher. As he was talking somewhat freely about his acquaintance with that city, a young Boer from Swaziland standing at the window whispered to me that if I did not want to get him into trouble I had better warn him to put a guard on his tongue. I think that this little incident shows how well disposed towards us the people were in many cases. I do not think that this predilection altogether begins and ends with us soldiers, though undoubtedly a large majority look upon us as blindly carrying out our orders without being much concerned with what we are fighting about.

The night passed as nights generally do pass in a train where there are too many occupants of the carriage for all to recline, and the morning came and reminded us that we had before us the ordeal of arriving at Pretoria. Of breakfast at Heidelberg I have no

very distinct recollection, save that the coffee was indifferent and the butter very rancid; but these trifles were borne with complacency by our escort, who, I think, appreciated the full-flavoured lubricant to which we took exception.

The train rolled along at a steady irritating pace, until by the hilly nature of the ground it was easy to tell that we were approaching the Boer capital. First a fort appeared frowning down upon us from a wooded hill on our right, then another on a similar feature to our left. Passing down the gorge between these two mute guardians of the city on this, its southern side, we clashed over some points and knew it was the junction of the railway to Delagoa.

A few minutes more and we were steaming alongside the platform of the terminus, the cynosure of all eyes; for a goodly crowd had collected to view the latest captures by the brave burghers at the front. Our journey to the metropolis of the South African Republic was at an end, and nothing remained but to employ one's wits in devising the best means of completing the circular tour so unwillingly commenced. For that purpose, however, I recognised that a return ticket and a personally conducted journey were equally unnecessary and undesirable.

II.—LIFE AT THE MODEL SCHOOL.

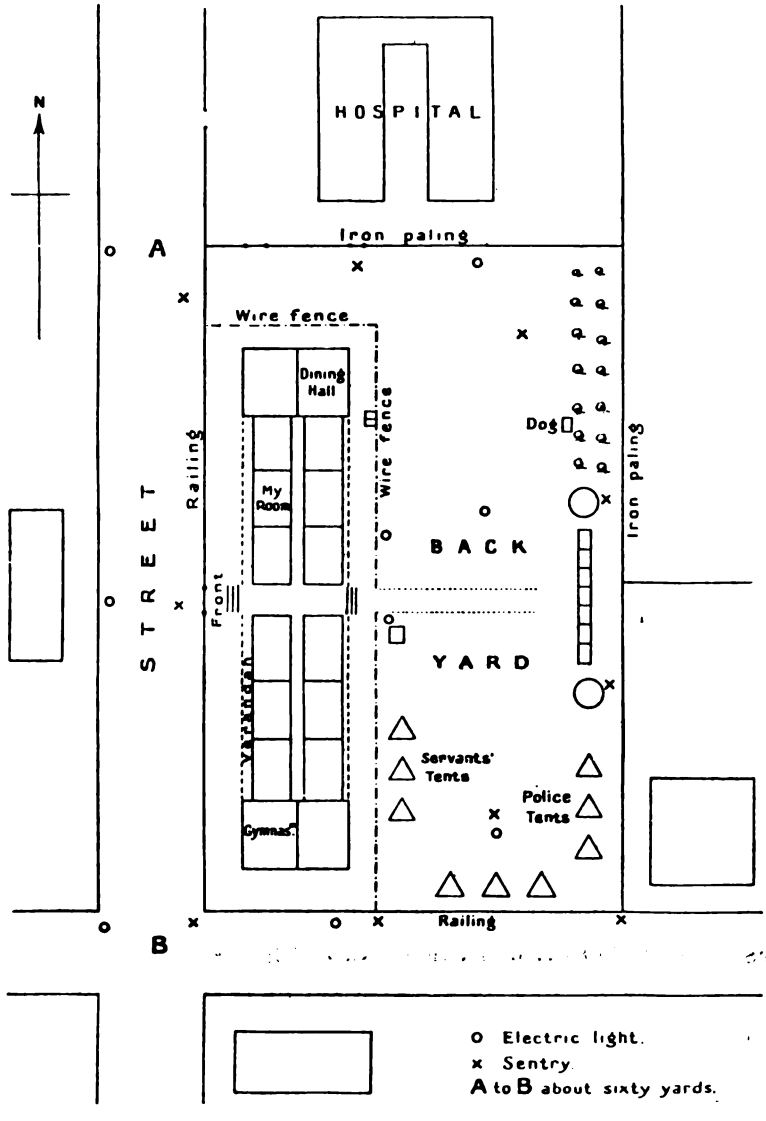
A few minutes after the train came to a standstill at Pretoria we were requested to alight. This was no sooner done than necks were craned forward to obtain a glimpse of the new arrivals, and the camera fiend, ever lying in wait for the unwary, began the operation of transferring our features to his film. Pressing my hat over my brows, I endeavoured to put my physiognomy as far as possible into the shade. A lane was cleared through the living mass, and, joined by an officer of the Natal Carabineers (a prisoner from Harrismith) who was privily informed of Brockie's deception, we were formed up in a small party; the men were in a larger. Churchill was led aside to join the latter, conducted by a burly, evil-looking police official. I remonstrated with this Jack-in-office, and pointed out to him that a war correspondent ranked as an officer, and further informed him who this particular correspondent was. All the reply vouchsafed was, "We know and care nothing for your lords and ladies here." I disdained further conversation with such a person. Like criminals we were marched off under a strong escort of police, but after a few yards I perceived a portly and still more ill-favoured-looking person, who turned out to be a certain Malan, field-cornet of Pretoria. Accosting him, I repeated my explanations, and was rewarded by Churchill joining us a few moments later. Some time afterwards we heard incidentally that when the first party of officers and men captured reached Pre-

toria, they were marched all round the town,—a trophy for the inhabitants to see. The Boers, however, were greatly disappointed that they were not wearing the red coats as in 1881, and complained bitterly that wearing khaki was not fair, it was "so much more difficult to see." The men were marched to the racecourse, on the outskirts of the town, and, after passing along a few unfrequented streets, we arrived in front of the Staats Model School. On the verandah I noticed several acquaintances, and once inside the gate we were beset by inquiries as to how we were captured, what the latest news was, and where Buller and his army were. At this early stage of the campaign there was little to tell, and, tearing myself away, I speedily found some one who explained to me the routine of the establishment, and where one would sleep, and feed, and so on.

I regret that I must weary my readers with a somewhat minute description of the building and its surroundings, as it was from here that I made more than one unsuccessful, and at length a successful, attempt to escape. A reference to the accompanying plan will here and later help to elucidate matters.

The Staats Model School, a substantial single-storeyed red brick edifice, is built at the corner of one of the parallelograms into which the town is subdivided, its length running approximately north and south. It is, as its name implies, an educational establishment for the youth of Pretoria, and is divided into a number of school-rooms and lecture-halls. It contains in all sixteen rooms in the body of the building, including two at each end. A long central passage runs almost throughout its length, terminated by the end rooms, and across this is the passage from the front entrance to the door into the yard or playground. On both sides of the building is a verandah which extends along the exterior of the six central rooms, and this again is overlapped by the four end rooms. One of these end rooms is fitted up as a gymnasium, and another was used by us as a fives-court. Outside a railing, breast-high, ran round the west and south sides, the two remaining sides being enclosed by a corrugated iron paling six feet and a half high. In addition to these, a wire netting ten feet high ran parallel to the paling but close to the building, and through this an opening immediately facing the back door led to the grass-covered back-yard. Across the yard, in which were the tents of our soldiers, servants, and the police guard, were some low buildings connected with the iron palings. A double row of trees ran close to the eastern paling. At night this yard was lighted by four electric lights. On the two sides of the building which did not look upon the street were private houses in gardens, that on the north side being used as a Red Cross hospital, with a door of communication in the iron paling which opened into the school-yard. The houses across the streets were occupied. Our

PLAN OF STAATS MODEL SCHOOL, PRETORIA



guard at this time consisted of twenty-seven men and three corporals of the South African Republican Police, which furnished nine sentries in reliefs of four hours. They were armed with Lee-Metford rifles and revolvers, and carried whistles. The rifles were not loaded, but each sentry wore a bandolier full of cartridges. Five of these sentries were posted outside the enclosure and the remainder within, and the public were forbidden to approach nearer to us than the opposite side of the street. No vehicle, horse, or bicycle was permitted to pass the school; and even dogs were driven away lest they should be the bearers of messages.

The town was guarded, principally for the protection of property and for the arrest of suspicious persons, by special constables, who were posted in every street, armed with revolvers, and in some cases accompanied by their canine friends. These mounted duty at 6 or 7 P.M., according to the hour of sunset, and after 10 P.M. were entitled to demand passes from persons walking in the town. Beyond them, again, were mounted patrols, who by day and night watched the main roads into the town, preventing the ingress and egress of persons unprovided with permits. No one not in possession of a passport could travel by rail, which effectually barred that means of exit to us.

The prisoners living at the school at this time consisted of the officers of the cavalry and mounted infantry captured at Dundee on the 20th October, those taken at Nicholson's Nek, and some stray prisoners taken at other times.

In charge of us were two officials—one a Boer commandant, the other a Hollander gentleman, Dr Gunning, who at the same time discharged the double functions of manager of the Zoological Gardens and Curator of the Museum. The commandant was not exactly a pattern of every virtue, but the doctor was uniformly courteous, and did all that he could to make our confined existence as bearable as possible. Our daily routine reminded one of school, without work or common task to fill the hours which dragged so slowly by. Fortunately, however, we were allowed to join the Staats Library, from which a fair selection of books to suit most tastes could be obtained. This was indeed a boon to most of us.

To my surprise, for otherwise escape would have been made much more difficult, we were allowed to wear plain clothes, and were even provided with a suit and some other necessaries on arrival. The small party which arrived at the same time as I did was provided each with a ready-made suit of hideous mustard colour, quite unsuitable for passing through Pretoria unnoticed. We managed, however, to procure garments of a more sombre and less conspicuous hue.

Our meals were simple but sufficient. The Transvaal Government gave us a free daily ration of ½ lb. of beef, tinned or fresh, some bread, tea, and

potatoes. As this was inadequate, a mess committee undertook the thankless task of feeding us at the rate of about 2s. 6d. per diem. Those who desired could purchase luxuries, and indeed almost anything but firearms, through a local dealer.

Space for exercise was limited, for beyond the small yard in which some played rounders and quoits, we were restricted to walking round and round the building, reminding one of life on board ship. Inside we had the gymnasium and a room which was eventually used as a fives-court. Chess, bridge-whist, and "patience" helped to pass the evenings and wet days. Those who had friends in hospital next door were permitted to visit them, and by this means we occasionally obtained some news of the outside world. The daily papers published in Pretoria and Johannesburg also were to be obtained; but their contents, coupled with the information which our jailors volunteered, were of a nature to depress one's spirits,—always provided one was foolish enough to place any credence in them. I must not omit to say here that beer was allowed, and that one might walk round the buildings as late as one liked, and sleep on the verandah. The inhabitants of Pretoria took considerable interest in us, and some amusing expedients were adopted to procure our photographs.

One day a cab drove up at an hour when, like wild beasts in confinement, we were walking round and round our cage; the window nearest to us was draped with black cloth, in which a small hole, pierced the size of a camera lens, was visible. This vehicle remained some time, after which the occupant, having got all he wanted, drove off. Detectives were frequently to be seen watching us as we took our exercise, and taking down descriptions of our appearance, gait, and so on. But Sunday was the day of the week when we were most favoured. Towards sunset the youth and beauty (I can't say rank and fashion) of the town passed and repassed our scholastic retreat, some gazing on us with looks of sympathy, others as if they would be glad to have a shot at us through the railings.

I must not forget one young lady in particular, evidently of a deeply sympathetic nature, who, I heard, was named after one of those flowers which in heathen mythology was adopted as a disguise by some forlorn maiden pursued by the enamoured Jupiter. Beyond glances shot over the railing at twenty yards, she was quite safe from the inmates of our dwelling. It was said, and I believe truly, that after Churchill's escape, when every English person in Pretoria was suspected of complicity, she was arrested by the unchivalrous Dutch, and though she could have rendered him no assistance whatever, was fined £25.

The interest which Churchill's arrival had at first provoked had by no means abated, and he received many visitors with whom animated discussions on the all-absorbing topic of the

war were engaged in. Some hope of release was held out to him; but the impression which had gone forth (an incorrect one) that he had borne arms against the Republic during the armoured train incident made that somewhat problematical.

The thought of evading the vigilance of the guard and making my way back to the front had scarcely for an instant been absent from my mind, and I was fully resolved to effect it at the earliest favourable opportunity. An attempt to bribe the sentries to look the other way, while one passed the barrier, met with no success, and although some months later I renewed it, offering a sentry who was well disposed towards us £100, he was not to be tampered with. He said that if I got out of the building I could never get out of the country, there were so many patrols and other precautions to prevent the escape of prisoners, and that in any case the sentries on his right hand and left would see, and not be silent. Another difficulty which presented itself, even had one succeeded in gaining over our amiable policeman, was the impossibility of being sure that he would be on duty at the best place of exit, on the most suitable occasion.

Ultimately we came to the decision that outside assistance in getting out of the guarded enclosures was unattainable, and that we must depend on our own devices.

The plan which Sergeant Brockie and I at length evolved was to climb out of the enclosure at the place where the low buildings at the back of the yard were situated. The spot chosen was one on which the electric light did not shine; and provided the sentry, who generally stood close to this place, happened to move a few paces from it, no great difficulty was to be anticipated. Only one sentry could possibly see any one climbing over, and if his back were turned, provided he heard nothing, his eyes would certainly be of no avail.

Once outside the yard, creeping through the adjacent gardens we could gain the streets, then the exterior of the town, and, following the railroad to Delagoa, either board the 11.10 P.M. train (a portion of which consisted of trucks) at some steep gradient, or wait for it at Eerste Fabriken Station, thirteen miles distant. Travelling with it till close on daybreak, which would bring us near Balmoral (the centre of a coal district), we would hide all day, and at nightfall search for a coal-truck in the adjacent sidings. By this means, if successful, the Portuguese frontier might be passed.

The information regarding trains, special police, and other details was gradually accumulated, and early in December the plan was ripe for execution.

On the 7th of that month two of our soldier servants belonging to the 18th Hussars succeeded in breaking out and escaping. They climbed over the offices at the back of the yard during the dinner-hour, a time at which the vigilance of the sentries was somewhat

relaxed. I believe the police found out that they had gone, but thinking that they would not be missed said nothing about it to the commandant. The two soldiers, we heard afterwards, were caught at no great distance from Pretoria, and after being identified were lodged in jail.

The escape of these men made one feel that no time was to be lost, and all that was required was a slack and unobservant sentry, one who would during the dinner-hour move a few paces from his post and provide the necessary opportunity.

Up to this time Churchill, as I have said, had had some hopes of release, but on the 9th December he told me they were dissipated, and knowing that Sergeant Brockie and I intended to escape, he suggested coming with us. We consented, though the certainty that he would be missed within a few hours lessened the chances of success. The night of the 12th came, and we decided to go if possible; but as the moon would rise about 7.45 P.M. and illuminate the dark spot where we meant to break out, the opportunity would, we knew, be a fleeting one. "There is many a slip," as the proverb has it, and Brockie and I were doomed to disappointment. Churchill saw his chance and took it, but when I tried to follow, the sentry, who now obstinately stuck to his post, saw me, and to go was impossible.

I will not dwell longer on this unsuccessful attempt, for on the principle that

> "Things without remedy
> Should be without regard: what's done is done,"—

the only course was to await events and adopt some other plan. We knew now, however, that escape by our first scheme was no longer practicable; and this was amply proved by the events of the following day, which I will leave to the next chapter.

III.—REVOLVING PLANS OF ESCAPE.

In order to conceal the sudden departure of the special war correspondent of the 'Morning Post,' and obtain for him as long a start as possible, we made up a dummy figure which, placed in his bed, had such a natural appearance that early on the morning of the 13th it was invited to accept a cup of coffee by a soldier servant. No reply being vouchsafed, the beverage was placed on a chair. But our attempts to defer the evil hour of discovery were speedily frustrated; for a barber of the town, who, watched by a policeman, plied his trade on certain days in the school, came by appointment at 8 A.M., and failing to find his client, roused suspicion in the mind of his escort. These suspicions were conveyed to Dr Gunning, who came himself to see what was the matter. I had endeavoured to get rid of the barber by telling him that he was not required that morning, but, unfortunately, he was

an inquisitive, persistent fellow, who was unwilling to depart before earning his expected fee. Dr Gunning came and made inquiries regarding Churchill's whereabouts, but obtained no information.

At 9.30 A.M., when the commandant returned, a roll was called, and each prisoner's presence carefully noted. The fact of there being an absentee became apparent.

I knew that by this time, if Churchill had caught the night train, he should be at least fifty miles from Pretoria, and well out of the reach of any patrols which might be despatched thence. Steps were now undertaken for his capture; his description was telegraphed everywhere; and so great was the Government's annoyance at his escape and its desire to capture him, that the members thought of nothing else for some days, and the whole State machinery came to a standstill. Several policemen who were supposed to have been bribed were removed and replaced by others; many Englishmen's houses were searched; an English nurse in the hospital next door, falsely accused of helping him, was put over the border; and more than one arrest of persons supposed to answer to his description was made.

Next day Mr De Souza, Under Secretary of State for War, a Portuguese gentleman, told me that General Joubert had telegraphed from before Ladysmith to the effect that he was satisfied that Mr Winston Churchill had not borne arms against the Republic, and that he approved of his unconditional release. I leave the reader to believe this or not as he chooses. Mr De Souza added that his Government was now indifferent as to whether he was found or not, as in the former case he would be released.

Many drastic changes now took place in the police and other arrangements for the security of the prisoners. By day and night sentries were posted in the adjacent gardens, and their numbers were for some days augmented from nine to seventeen. Roll-calls took place twice daily; beer, newspapers, visiting patients in hospital, walking round the building after 8.30 P.M., and sleeping on the verandah were all prohibited. For a time we were subjected to many petty annoyances, which displayed to fine advantage the narrow-minded and malicious nature which actuated our warders.

Dr Gunning did his best to smooth our difficulties, but he ran the risk of drawing suspicion on himself by so doing. Public opinion in Pretoria ran in favour of very stringent measures, and the Government (which endeavoured to deserve the name of a popular one, with the Dutch at least) felt compelled to meet to some extent the wishes of the citizens.

Several detectives and the inspector of police inspected the building and surroundings with a view of preventing a recurrence of the event of the 12th, and the result of their visit showed itself after a few days. The offices at the back of the yard, originally connected with the paling, were isolated, so that the sentries could pass

behind and prevent any one from climbing over; the lower branches of the trees were cut off so that no dark place remained; and the reflectors of the electric lights were adjusted in such a way that no spot was now in shade. I shall refer later on to two additional lights which were placed in the streets on the southern and western sides of the building, as they were destined to play a part in a future plan. The sentries, who now kept their rifles loaded, were placed under the inspector of police, a German; and every night that officer visited them without fail, and saw that they were thoroughly vigilant.

Up to the time of the incident I have just recounted, the Reverend Godfray, a Church of England clergyman, had held a service in the schoolroom on Sundays; but after Churchill's escape he deemed it wiser to forsake us. I believe he thought that he incurred the danger of being suspected of complicity, and hence of being put over the border. Some of us considered his fears somewhat groundless, seeing that the commandant never left his side during the whole time he was engaged in his ministrations. Fortunately for us, the Reverend Adrian Hofmeyer, who had been most treacherously taken prisoner on the western border (I think through the instrumentality of Cronje), and in spite of ill-health had been kept for some time in a prison-cell, arrived to join our company. The commandant in charge of us would fain have induced him to play the part of *mouchard*, but he reckoned without his host. I feel sure that every officer who was a prisoner soon felt that in Mr Hofmeyer he had the staunchest of friends, and that a most loyal Englishman had joined our throng. Though cut off entirely from wife and family, and allowed to receive no letters from them, suffering no doubt from depression of spirits and ennui, he was ever ready with a kindly word and sympathetic look, which went far to mitigate the trials of our confinement. His able and encouraging discourses will not readily be forgotten by some of us, and as I understand that he may publish them, it is not improbable that they may reach farther than was originally intended. At one time there was a talk of his release, but glad as we should have been to see this come about, many of us secretly hoped that he would not leave us.

For the first few days after Churchill's escape we occupied ourselves by noting the various alterations undertaken for our security, and in thinking out some new plan of operations. One day we made a raid upon some cupboards and broke them open, finding therein three screw-drivers, two triangular files, and a pair of wire-cutters. All of these were destined to be of service in the near future. Tales of escape from prison had always had a peculiar fascination for me, and I was as familiar with the true account of Latude's escape from the Bastille and Jack Sheppard's from the castle-ward in old Newgate, as I was with the

[illegible] escape [illegible] Edmondi [illegible] from the Model [illegible]. Our next plan was to be on the lines of the first of these.

On first arriving at the school the idea of digging our way out had presented itself to me, but as there was a prospect of escaping without going below ground the experiment proper was for the time being laid aside. Now we decided to put it in force. The occupants of our room [illegible] in number, since [illegible] had agreed to try to burrow their way to freedom, and besides a share of risk [illegible]. We invited Le Mesurier of the Natal Fusiliers, my companion in our successful escape from us, and being left-handed persons he proved a most unfortunate digger.

On Sunday the 17th December we made a preliminary exploration to ascertain whether there was space under the floor sufficient to contain the earth we should have to remove in our operations. Before cutting through the floor we examined the planks, which were well laid and dovetailed, and to our satisfaction found a trap-door. Removing the screws which held it in its place, we raised it and descended.

As three of us were doomed to occupy this earthy chamber for nearly three weeks, I shall here give a brief description of it. The floor was about two feet and a half above the ground, and the space below, which corresponded with the room above, was divided into five narrow compartments by four transverse stone walls on which the cross-beams that carried the flooring were laid. Each chamber was about eighteen feet in length and three feet and a half in breadth, and there were man-holes in the walls. A certain amount of air came into this damp space through small ventilators under the verandah, but the atmosphere was very close, and one could not see except by candle-light.

We now divided ourselves into three reliefs, and on Monday morning commenced work. It had to be carried out as silently as possible. The scheme was to sink a shaft about twelve feet long by five in length and three in width, and from the bottom of this to drive a tunnel diagonally under the street on the western side of the building for about one hundred feet. This would bring us under a kitchen-garden, whence we could easily escape after dark, unseen. For digging implements we used our screw-drivers, and succeeded in breaking through some three feet of caked earth as hard as concrete. After this was penetrated the work became easier; but to our dismay, though not surprise, two feet deeper landed us in water. After many ineffectual attempts to get rid of it, by carrying it to the most distant of the five compartments, we found that the inflow, especially after rain, greatly exceeded what we could bale out, and our second plan accordingly fell through. It had been a work of considerable labour, armed as we were with such unsuitable tools, and the disappoint-

ment at having to confess ourselves beaten was great. Some lines by Sir Walter Scott kept constantly recurring to me—

> "Patience waits the destined day;
> Strength can clear the cumber'd way;"

—and the word *impossible* was not to be thought of.

The numbers who were now incarcerated in the Model School had increased greatly, and Field-Cornet Malan, before leaving for the front, had started a scheme for locating us in a much more roomy place, which we understood was in course of construction and was approaching completion. We lay on our oars for a time, hoping that the new place might be more favourable to our plans than our present habitation.

The days were now growing more and more monotonous, news was scarce and not encouraging, and beyond reports that we should shortly shift our quarters, and the occasional arrival of a prisoner, nothing occurred to break the unvarying sameness of our fungus-like existence. The possibility of organising a rising and break out of our prison had gone no farther than the stage of discussion. The difficulty of obtaining reliable outside help and of procuring sufficient arms, and many other points, led to the final abandonment of the project.

All through January Sergeant Brockie and I had kept watch night after night, between 7.30 and 8.30, thinking it possible to climb the railings and to slip past a certain sentry when his back was turned. Fortunately for us, he never gave us the wished-for opportunity, for I am now convinced that some other sentry would have seen us, and that we should not have got far.

At the end of January we were allowed once more to buy a daily paper, and to visit, under supervision, our friends in hospital. The news gleaned from the 'Volkstem,' a Government organ, was as nothing compared to a source from which we obtained the latest and most reliable information. It came about in this wise. We had noticed a man who occasionally passed the Model School, generally accompanied by a St Bernard's dog. From his manner he seemed sympathetic and anxious to communicate with us, and he sometimes muttered some words as he passed. As time went on he took to signalling to us by the Morse code with his stick. As the police seemed very suspicious of him, he could not send more than a word or two, such as "British victory." The sentries became more suspicious of him, and I believe he was told not to pass the school. For a time, at any rate, he rarely was seen. At length a system of communication was arranged with him through the medium of the hospital, and we found out that we were indebted for our news to one of the principal telegraphists in Pretoria. Matters were soon on a better footing. Our sympathetic signaller took to visiting a certain house, and in the afternoon he sent many messages to us from

the verandah. As, however, his duties prevented him from coming daily, and his presence at this house was calculated to arouse suspicion, he instructed two young ladies, who, we imagined, were daughters of our opposite neighbour, in the art of signalling, and they undertook the risky work of transmitting to us the news with which he supplied them.

Standing well inside the door, one would signal with a white flag, while the other, seated on the verandah, gave warning when a sentry or passer-by was approaching. By this means we now received, twice daily, the latest news, from the Boer point of view, of what went on at the front; and I believe that we were the recipients of the same telegrams which were laid before his Honour President Kruger. The same news was often served up in the daily papers in a very different guise; sometimes it was omitted altogether.

It is difficult to be certain of one's dates where no notes or diary have been kept, but I think it was early in February that twelve officers were allowed, on parole, to attend the funeral of an officer of a Colonial corps. On their way back they drove past the President's house and saluted him as he sat smoking on his verandah. The old Dopper statesman at once rose and courteously returned the compliment, raising his tall hat. This was the only occasion on which any officer who was a prisoner in Pretoria saw him.

In the same month I happened one day to be leaning over the railings of our prison, ruminating on my hard fate and the difficulty of overcoming it, when I saw an unmistakable Englishman, accompanied by another man, of whom I took no particular note. They were passing by on the other side of the street, and their sympathetic looks attracting my notice, I responded. As the sequel will show, I was unconsciously looking at the very two men who were soon to give Le Mesurier and me invaluable aid in our escape, and, strange to say, they had done as much for Churchill.

The time was now approaching when our last and successful bid for freedom was to take place. On the 12th February I had heard from Sir William Nicholson that, as I expected, there was no possibility of my being exchanged under present circumstances. This was no disappointment, but it made me decide that to wait longer was useless. Rumours of our moving to the new building were now of almost daily occurrence, and from a plan which I had seen, it appeared to be a place from which escape would be even more difficult than from our present dwelling.

The scheme upon which we now based our hopes was to induce the English electrician in charge of the lighting of the town to extinguish the lights of the school and of that district of Pretoria in which it was situated, for half an hour on some dark night. We inquired through Major Adye,

who was in hospital, if he would help without divulging anything. The reply came that, being on parole, he regretted he could not. We heard afterwards that if the lights at the school had been extinguished the search-lights in the forts would have been turned on us at once. This plan having so far failed, we decided to do the extinguishing part of the programme ourselves by cutting the wires which lighted the building and back-yard.

Four conspirators were engaged in this scheme. The general idea was to cut the wire on some dark wet night, and, silently crossing the yard with feet encased in noiseless india-rubber shoes, pass between the sentries and climb as quickly as possible over the corrugated iron paling, and so attain the yard behind the hospital. Thence the street would easily be gained; and at the worst, if discovered, we could make a run for it and try to pass the special police, reach the Aapies river some two streets off, and, following its course, come eventually to the outskirts of the town.

This project, I need hardly say, was a very risky one, for we had bound ourselves to stop for nothing once the light went out. If seen, we should have to run the gauntlet of two sentries a few yards distant, who would shoot at us without hesitation. There seemed no other possible way of baffling the guards, and the most dangerous way is generally the safest. We trusted that on the light being suddenly extinguished the sentries would not see well for some seconds, and that their surprise might distract their attention from us.

In a place where we were so crowded, it was extremely difficult to discuss our plans in secret, and indeed privacy was nowhere to be found. To reach the roof of the building in which the electric wires were, it was necessary to remove a heavy ladder from the gymnasium and by its assistance climb through a trap-door in the roof of the main passage. By this means we explored the loft on one occasion, but as a permanent route it was radically bad. In order to succeed it was necessary to keep our arrangements absolutely secret, and this was impossible unless some other means of reaching the loft could be devised. At length a simple means occurred to me.

The roof of the gymnasium, which was of wood, had sloping sides, and by climbing to the top of one of the ladders a trap-door might be cut, and then we should have private access to the wires. I forthwith made a saw out of a table-knife, and the trap-door was cut and cross-battens screwed to it to keep it from falling out. In order to facilitate climbing over the iron paling, we prepared two plank ladders with padded ends; these we painted over with boot-blacking to render them inconspicuous.

Another important matter was the question of food. As we intended making for Mafeking, we expected to be several

days on the road, and sufficient provision of a non-bulky nature must be carried. We double-lined our waistcoats, making numerous pockets therein, each of which would hold one or two packets of chocolate. Should we have to run for it, we should be carrying weight where it would be least felt.

I have mentioned before that two extra electric lights had been placed in the street, and these were outside our control. There was a possibility that they might light up the yard more than we expected, but this was unavoidable. On more than one occasion I had made an inspection about 3 A.M., when all the lights in the building were out, and it seemed probable that these lights would have more effect than we had allowed for.

We had often remarked that no sooner had we got our plans well matured than some new difficulty would arise. The present scheme was no exception. One evening I was sitting on the back verandah when the inspector of police arrived, accompanied by a very objectionable species of sentry—a large white bull-terrier. This animal was allotted a permanent post, to which he was chained day and night, close to where we meant to break out. He seemed to be a dog of discrimination, for he showed a violent antipathy to policemen and a most amiable disposition towards us. As the nights were cold, we represented that his health might suffer, and he was shortly provided with a rude kennel, which we hoped would have the effect of inducing sleep, and so reducing his value as a sentry.

But a more trying incident was to follow, and at the risk of boring my readers with details I shall record it.

One of the rooms of the school had been used as a store-room, and as this was now required for other purposes, the stores were removed into the gymnasium. We were no longer masters of the situation, for the two officers of mercantile predilections who were in charge of this important department kept their office locked, and were frequently at work with accounts until a late hour. We managed, however, to secure a duplicate key of the gymnasium, which in some degree compensated us. Of course we could have taken the storekeepers into our confidence, but that was undesirable.

All was now ready, and a servant had been engaged to cut the wires. He had been introduced to the loft, and instructed what to do on receiving a certain signal. The afternoon of Friday, 23rd February, was dull and threatening, and there were unmistakable signs that we should have rain at night. Provided there were no lightning, all might be well. The gymnasium was vacated and locked up for the night at 8.30, and our accomplice was duly consigned to the spot where his wire-cutters were to operate. A drizzling rain was falling, and the wind whistled through the trees—the precursor of a stormy night. The sky was covered

with inky clouds, and the ground underfoot being damp, would deaden the sound of our footsteps as we crossed the yard. Fortune at last seemed to smile on our venture, for the sentries were one less in number than usual, the absentee being the very one close to whom we should have had to pass. This seemed an omen of success. At nine o'clock the four conspirators assembled on the verandah, ladder in hand, ready to creep with stealthy steps to the appointed spot. It was an exciting time, the prospect of escape so near and so uncertain. I gave the signal and the moments seemed like hours. Suddenly the lights in the building and yard went out, and like a flash we made for the gate through the wire-netting; but scarcely had we reached the barrier of wire when the buildings and yard were again illuminated. Back we crept to the verandah, imagining that our accomplice had received a shock which had disabled him, and had failed to cut the wire completely. Several minutes of suspense passed, and the sentries showed unmistakably that they were wondering what had happened. The corporal went his rounds, and seemed to be discussing the eccentricities of the light.

After some time our accomplice came and told us what had happened. He had cut the wire, he said, completely through, receiving a severe shock in so doing, and he now declined to take further part in so unpleasant an operation. After a consultation we decided that the guard being on the *qui vive* it would be in vain to cut the other wire that night and think to escape unseen. We therefore deferred the attempt till the next dark night.

Next day we insulated the wire-cutters with a silk handkerchief and some india-rubber, and obtained the services of another man to cut the wire. But the next night and the next again were bright and rainless, and unsuitable for an attempt. Monday, the 26th February, came, the day preceding Cronje's defeat and the anniversary of Majuba. The 27th was to be kept in Pretoria as a day of humiliation, and not as usual of exultation. About half-past five on Monday afternoon the electric lights in the back-yard, which together with those in the streets adjacent to the school were turned on some time before sunset, suddenly went out. The soldier servants, it was said, were kicking a football in the yard which had struck the wires and caused the mischief. To us conspirators what had occurred was plain. I heard afterwards that the English electrical engineer was sent for, but said he could not come till next day. It was said that he suspected that the light had not gone out from natural causes, and that he did not want to spoil sport by repairing it. If this be so, we have a great deal to thank him for. Some workmen came, but no attempt was made to repair the wire, the broken place in which, I think, they did not find. During dinner a written request was passed round, stat-

ing that the commandant desired that we would not walk round the building that evening. On coming out from dinner, a visit to the back-yard showed what an escape we had had on the previous Friday, through the non-extinction of the lights. The two subsidiary lights in the street illuminated the yard to such a degree that any one crossing it was distinctly visible.

The question now arose, What was to be done? Report said that we were to be moved to new quarters in two days, and from there escape, we believed, was hopeless. The cut wire and trap-door would be discovered on the morrow, and as the latter was in the quondam gymnasium, now store-room, the innocent storekeepers would be implicated. We should have to acknowledge that we were the culprits, and this would mean jail and no chance of escape. The situation was grave. To attempt to make one's way out by the back-yard was impossible, the sentries being doubled, and a Kafir cordon placed outside them. Nothing remained but to hide, and should the move take place and our retreat remain undiscovered, we might thus effect our escape. The Boers would think that we had taken advantage of the darkness, bribed a sentry, and so made off. This was exactly what occurred, and strange to say, despite the precautions taken by the commandant to prevent such an occurrence, he concluded that we had gone. For once the mistrust which one Dutchman has of another stood us in good stead. We had the satisfaction of baffling the whole talent of the Pretoria police.

There was but one hiding-place which gave a reasonable chance of non-discovery—under the floor. This decided on, the trap-door was opened, a vow of secrecy extracted from the officers in our room, some necessaries taken, and Le Mesurier, Brockie, and I descended to the scene of our former operations. The trap-door was secured, and nothing showed our absence but three empty beds.

IV.—GONE TO GROUND.

From the day on which we began the passive part of our escape, as I may term it, in distinction to the active part which followed when we left our underground dwelling, I kept a few notes, and as I brought them from Pretoria, it will be more convenient if I write this chapter somewhat in the form of a diary.

After going below the floor on the night of the 26th February, we prepared to make ourselves as comfortable as the surroundings would permit. We decided to sleep in the compartment which I have described elsewhere, next to the ventilators underneath the verandah, as here the atmosphere was not quite so close

as in the other chambers. We only possessed one blanket apiece, not daring to take more below with us for fear of arousing suspicion, since a person who was believed to have got clear away would hardly take all his bedding with him. The ground made a very hard couch, and this, added to the lack of fresh air and the excitement of the adventure, caused sleeping to be very difficult.

At length, after a night of continual turning over and over, trying to find a softer spot, we saw by the faint light which filtered through the ventilators that another day had come. This day, we thought, meant for us either discovery and imprisonment or non-discovery and escape. But escape was farther off than we supposed. Ere we shook the dust of Pretoria from off our feet, we had to undergo what it makes one shudder to recall.

It was now 5.30 A.M., and stealthy footsteps were audible overhead. It was the commandant going his morning rounds, and counting his charges as they lay asleep. A surprise was in store for him. Suddenly his footsteps ceased. In imagination we pictured what was occurring. He had reached one of the vacant beds; he was looking at it in amazement. No dummy figure had been deemed necessary this time. His tread was heard again, and twice more it ceased as two more blanks were seen. Then came a sound of voices. He was inquiring from some drowsy mortal where the usual occupants of the vacant beds were. The conversation was of the briefest; what reply he got I do not know, so I cannot give it here; and perhaps it is as well, for the hour was early and the inquirer had no claim to popularity among us. Whatever was its nature, the sounds of his retreating footsteps were soon heard as he left the room. We knew and were satisfied that our absence was at least suspected.

The hours rolled slowly on. At 8 A.M. a roll-call took place. Our absence passed from the region of doubt to certainty. What would happen next?

At 9.45 I heard the voice of Colonel Bullock bidding all go outside the building. A search was about to be made. An exciting moment was drawing near, yet we felt reasonably confident that our hiding-place would be overlooked. Soon the tramp of many feet, "of armèd men the hum," resounds from the tiles of the passage. Nearer and nearer it comes; our hearts begin to beat a little faster. The door is reached, barred by the arm of no fair brave scion of the house of Douglas. In they throng, a posse of detectives and armed police, with but an inch of deal between them and their prey. We hold our breath as they approach the roof of our humble dwelling. The room above does not offer many hiding-places—no secret panel or priest's hole—nought but four bare walls, ten beds, a cupboard. Soon they leave. All the talent of the Vidocqs and Le Coqs (with apologies for the comparison) of

Pretoria has failed to scent our lair. We breathe freely again.

The anxiety of our faithful comrades who remained outside was great, and their relief when they heard we had not been discovered greater still. After leaving our room the crowd of searchers hunted through the other rooms, and finding nothing of us, they repaired to the roof. Here our rude trap-door was immediately seen, and near it, left there by accident, lay my saw. This was pounced on by Dr Gunning for the Museum, an interesting account of which appeared in the 'Strand Magazine' of April. The hole in the electric wire was also noticed. By 10.45 the search was over, and the unsuspecting occupants of the building began crowding in. Not content with searching the several houses in the neighbourhood also with a view to the same purpose, to prevent our escape, already [illegible] case [illegible] at by the [illegible] we had [illegible] during [illegible] [illegible]

[1] The following appeared [illegible]

"On Monday night the [illegible] confined in the State M[illegible] were at dinner last night. Their names are Captain [illegible] of the Dublin Fusiliers, [illegible] former were, we believe, [illegible] at Chieveley, at the battle [illegible] time before that. The [illegible] being discovered, and [illegible] fugitives from getting [illegible]

"Yesterday afternoon [illegible] that the three British [illegible] the Model School had [illegible] the news reached Mr [illegible] a number of his country [illegible] in which the men were [illegible] a spot where the police [illegible] partaken of food, [illegible] that one of the Hollanders [illegible] to be acting suspiciously [illegible] run, and endeavoured [illegible] the veldt. The [illegible] man, when he was [illegible] He stated that the [illegible]

factory to us to know how completely they were off the scent, and how remote from the building their thoughts were. I heard afterwards that the builder of the Staats Model School was a Scotsman. He must have known of the possible hiding-place we occupied; but if he happened to be in Pretoria he kept his own counsel. I may here mention in passing, that no restrictions were imposed on account of our escape, a matter of some satisfaction to us, but the tide of war was turning, and the victories of Lord Roberts were beginning to be felt. The harmonium of which we had been deprived some two months back was now restored, and a piano promised. This day we heard that the move to new quarters was expected to take place in two days. The complement of officers in our room was made up, but the two new occupants never knew that we were hidden below. Our accomplices above had managed things well. Without our principal ally, Frankland of the Dublin Fusiliers, who was taken prisoner with me, I don't know what we should have done. My only regret was that he was not with us; but we could not have dispensed with his help, for he was clever and reliable and full of expedients. He undertook our commissariat arrangements. The trap-door, which was under his bed, could only be opened occasionally during the day, and then with great precaution.

When we first went below we had to be on "short commons," but as we did not expect to be there long, and as the life was very sedentary, we judged it best to eat sparingly. For a day or two we fed on chocolate, jam, and potted meat, and a little biscuit or bread; but as time went on and we became more exacting in our requirements, we took the officer who presided over the stores into our confidence, and through his agency we lived in plenty. A bottle of cocoa as a night-cap was our greatest luxury. A double knock, twice repeated, was the signal that the trap-door was about to be opened. The "signalgrams" from the telegraphist and the daily paper reached us daily, and those

of Koedoespoort, but, after a diligent search, no traces were found of him. While conducting the search two Englishmen, connected with one of the local banks, were found amongst the hills. These men had applied to Lieut. Du Toit on the previous day for a permit to leave the town with their bicycles, but had been informed that they must apply to the field-cornet for such permission. This, it appears, they had not done, and as a result they were arrested on suspicion, and conveyed into town by a guard of police, where they were lodged in jail until the matter is investigated.

"The escaped officers seemed to have aided their flight by severing the electric wires in the roof of the building, for which purpose they had constructed a saw from a broken table-knife, and cut out a hole in the ceiling sufficiently large to admit the body of a man."

And in the 'Standard Digger's News': "No further reports have come in regarding the three escaped officers, but important information regarding them has come to the Government."

in our confidence did all they could to make our existence bearable and to encourage hopes.

The most trying part of the under-floor life, next to the lack of fresh air, was the constrained position in which we constantly had to remain. To move about we had to creep on hands and knees. I don't know what a "housemaid's knee" may be, but we all developed very delicate knees, after a few days, from creeping on the rough ground. Our heads, too, suffered a good deal from bumping against the beams and hitting hard walls in the dark. Lack of any kind of exercise, if one is not weak and ill, is more intolerable than might be supposed.

Coughing, sneezing, or talking above a whisper was absolutely forbidden, for "love, a cough, and smoke will not remain secret." After a day or two we broke through the cross-wall and got under the next room. This made our dwelling a little more airy, and was otherwise advisable. How we passed our time will not take long to tell. We generally tried to make our night last till 10 A.M., then had a little food, played patience; lunch at 1 P.M. over, we read or slept; food again at seven, cocoa, and bed. Not an exciting way of passing the twenty-four hours, but the only way.

Unfortunately we had no means of washing, and to get a bucket of water through the trap-door was too unsafe. We had therefore to join the brigade of the "great unwashed" till better times. The noise of the occupants of the rooms above tramping up and down was very trying, and I suffered much from headaches, aggravated by walking into cross-beams. Such was the damp that our boots, money-belts, and anything of leather, turned green in a night, and burning candles did not help much in drying the atmosphere.

Six uneventful days passed. Though at first great hopes were held out of a move, they grew less and less as day succeeded day. We thought at first that a week would be about as much of this kind of life as we could endure. Now we hardened ourselves to hold out for a fortnight. We fully recognised that each day that passed would give us a longer start when the time to emerge from the school came; for the officials had no idea that we were in Pretoria, and our having escaped was becoming ancient history. This was the sole consolation we could draw from the situation.

My companions caused me no little alarm, for one was given to talking in his sleep, sometimes with vehemence and gesticulation, and the other snored. At the hour of the commandant's early visit I generally tried to be awake, lest the one should be holding forth or the other trumpeting.

On Sunday, the 4th March, we heard that Mr Hofmeyer had taken as the subject of his sermon "Patience," and had otherwise specially remembered us. He did not then know

where we were. On the 6th a catastrophe nearly occurred. Our rule was that when we moved for any reason from one compartment to another, the candle, if one were lighted, must invariably be extinguished. The reason for this precaution was that the flooring above us was near, and painted with tar to ward off white ants. On this day I had gone into the adjacent apartment to watch Le Mesurier playing patience, and had left a candle burning. After a time a smell of burning attracted our attention, but we played on and thought no more about it. At length the smell got so bad that I looked where I had been and where Le Mesurier and I slept, side by side, and found his blanket and a corner of his coat in an advanced stage of smoulder, ready to burst into flames with very little encouragement. With some difficulty we managed to extinguish the burning cloth; but the whole space was now full of smoke, which was flowing out through the ventilators and into the open air in front of the building, not far from where a sentry stood. Hastily closing the ventilators with paper, we prevented them from becoming a source of discovery, and for a long time we sat in the stifling smoke, with smarting eyes, until it gradually became dissipated. No evil resulted from my carelessness.

On the 8th March we heard that no move was likely to take place, and that a few days earlier Le Mesurier and I had been captured on the Natal border. Things were now growing somewhat desperate, and even Mark Tapley would scarce have felt cheerful under similar circumstances. Sometimes we felt a half regret that we had undertaken what was proving itself to be so futile and disagreeable an attempt to gain our freedom. Our friends above urged us to come up and live in the roof, or at least occasionally emerge into the room overhead and get some fresh air; but we set our faces against such proposals. The fewer who know a secret the better. Others would get to know it, and as many of the sentries understood English, they might easily overhear and understand some indiscreet remark as to our whereabouts. We hardened our hearts, and decided to remain where we were until the prisoners were exchanged, the campaign concluded, or ourselves too ill to bear it any longer.

Some twenty persons now knew where we were, among them Mr Hofmeyer, who supported our resolution to see the matter to an end of some sort. The shout of "Letters" which occasionally reached us was very trying: we knew there must be some for us, but to claim them was impossible.

We had now several visitors at night in the shape of rats, who daily grew bolder, running over us as we lay, and at times upsetting tins with alarming noise. Our friend the white bull-terrier still kept watch and ward outside, and would have been of use now could we have borrowed his services.

On the 9th March we definitely heard that there was no chance of moving. Some time prior to this, and about the time we hid below, we had been told that the Committee who were supposed to look after our interests had condemned the new building as insanitary, and that the State Secretary, Mr Reitz, concurred in this opinion. President Kruger, however, considered it good enough for us, and as he had gone to the Free State to rouse the waning courage of the "brave burghers," we hoped that when he returned he would insist on his wishes being complied with. There was no wooden floor to this building, and early in March it was rumoured that one was being laid. We now heard to our dismay that all work had ceased. The only chance left of the officers being removed was the arrival of more prisoners; and there was still room for some twenty more. There was the possibility of the Model School being required as a hospital, should the wounded from Volksrust and Bloemfontein be sent to Pretoria. Though things looked black, they had looked so before, and something might "turn up."

March 10.—We decided that, if only for the sake of exercise, we must do something. The only thing was to dig. A reference to the plan of the building will show that the end room on the north side was not far from the hospital. We resolved to get under the floor of this room and drive a shallow tunnel under the pathway, on which the prisoners took their exercise, into the yard of the hospital. A shallow tunnel above water-level, well shored up with timber, would be safe, and we could break out after the eight-o'clock relief had been posted.

When our first plan of digging had failed, we had thought of the plan we were now considering; but as at that time the police were quartered in tents in the back-yard, and in order to get from there had to pass through the gate into the hospital, near where our exit-hole would come, we had not carried it into effect. Now the police tents had been removed and pitched in the street south of the Model School, outside the yard, and the hospital-gate was not used after dark, except for the marching in and out of reliefs. The plan was now, therefore, feasible. We had our old tools with us, and arranged with our friends above to collect all the wood they could find—shelves, umbrella-stands, &c.—which would be required for the tunnel. We also ordered a saw and a hatchet, which were supplied: they were supposed to be for use in the kitchen.

March 11.—Le Mesurier and I broke through the two-foot cross-wall into the end room after some four hours' work. We had some difficulty in getting through, as we had to work silently, so as not to be heard above. We thought that if ever the authorities found that we had been below, they would have their work cut out to restore matters to their original condition. Emerging into the first compartment of the end

room, we crept through the man-holes, till we reached the outer wall. The ventilators here were only as long as the thickness of the wall, there being no verandah. We closed them all up, lest, should we work at night, the light of our candles might shine through.

Our scheme was to dig about four feet and a half down, then drive a tunnel about thirty feet long into the hospital-yard. We calculated that if we laboured hard we might complete the work in a fortnight. This day and the next we dug every moment we could, getting down some way in the hard earth, similar to that which we had before encountered. Our tools had been augmented by a pick, but in using it we made so much noise that we had unwillingly to lay it aside. We found that a bayonet and a steel skewer were the best implements.

On the afternoon of the 12th we heard that the officers in the room above us were complaining that they were disturbed by the noise of digging under their room, and that evening an order was given out that as the police were growing suspicious such work must cease. The conclusion we came to was that it was the noise and not the police that had given birth to the order, and we determined to continue work.

March 13.—News of the capture of Bloemfontein came. On the previous evening we had decided to try an experiment to soften the hard earth, and had emptied half-a-dozen bottles of water into our shaft. On going there this morning we found that it had had excellent results, and the ground was much less refractory. We got on famously, and the exercise did us so much good that we felt different beings. We now had strong hopes of escaping. These had been a good deal crushed by recent events, and now began to reassert themselves. We found that with care we could dig out the hard earth with little more noise than a rat makes in scratching a hole, and quite as fast as before we had watered it, when we had worked regardless of noise.

March 14.—We managed, when the two officers in our room who did not know we were below happened to be out of it, to get down a bucket of water, and perform some much-needed ablutions. Digging in a close atmosphere is not a cleanly operation, and the inside of the lid of a tin biscuit-box showed us what dirty objects we were; but after the use of the contents of the bucket we became recognisable. The life was beginning to tell on us, and our unshaven faces looked pale and thin. Most of this day was spent in digging; but our hands were bruised and blistered, and we did not make much progress. In the afternoon we got a piece of news which raised hopes in our breasts, but lest they should end in disappointment we tried to stifle them. A certain commandant had made an inspection of the school with a view to ascertaining its suitability for a hospital. We had, of course, no two opinions on that matter. To us it seemed an

ideal building for the purpose, more particularly since it adjoined the Red Cross Hospital. It would do the Boers no harm to occupy a building where we had been living for nearly three weeks under the floor! Our allies were unable to discover what this commandant's opinion was. To have displayed too much interest would have awakened suspicions. At last we had a peg on which to hang the worn-out remnant of our hopes.

March 15.—We continued our mining operations, and by night had far better news than we had dared to hope for. All day we had displayed less vigour in the work: a presentiment that our digging would again be fruitless must have seized us; indeed, we only worked from 11 A.M. till 1 P.M. At 3 o'clock we overheard some one use the word "move," and soon other remarks of a similar tenor caused us to listen intently. At any time it was difficult to hear what was said in the room above, unless it was shouted, and on this occasion we could detect no more encouraging words. At 4.30 P.M. we were in full possession of the excellent news. A note came down, in which we read with feelings indescribable, "We move tomorrow after breakfast. Patience has carried the day: you deserve your luck."

We had been seventeen days and nights below, and had still some twenty-four hours to pass. But the danger of discovery from internal causes was not yet over. Knowing that many officers, who did not know that we were in the building, had been digging, we were strongly of opinion that some of them would hide below to-night, thinking to escape after the move. That this was the case was soon ascertained.

As no officer had yet escaped from the Model School, I sent word to Colonel Hunt, R.A., saying that we had been hidden below for seventeen days, and that if any others hid at the eleventh hour, without cutting the electric wires as we had done, and so making some pretext, discovery for all was certain. I begged his assistance, and he came to the rescue in a way which made us feel most grateful to him. I was informed that he saw the senior officer of each room, and told them that there must be no hiding in the building, and that if any one in their room was at all recalcitrant he would see him, and explain the why and wherefore. I believe that six officers waited on him, and were told in confidence that we were still in the building.

As regards our food arrangements for the coming journey, we had between us 7½ lb. of chocolate, half-a-dozen tins of Brand's essence, four small tins of meat lozenges. We had also a very little biltong, of which we could have got plenty more, but we were dissuaded from carrying it by Sergeant Brockie, who told us that it was only eatable when cooked. We knew later that it is always eaten dry, and deeply regretted not having brought more.

We had decided to go to

Mafeking for the following reasons. Churchill had given an account of his escape in the papers, which, though I now know that, for obvious reasons, it was not in accordance with facts, was sufficiently in detail to make the Delagoa route unsafe. We were supposed to have gone to Mafeking, and as eighteen days had elapsed since our supposed escape, all search would have ceased. Mafeking was the nearest spot where fighting was going on, and we would chance three extra or rather famished mouths being unacceptable to the garrison.

All of us had maps of this route and of several others which we had drawn. In case the main doors were locked, we had provided ourselves with the keys of two rooms which looked out on the back-yard, and in which the windows were broken. After arranging a code of signals for the morrow, the trap-door was closed and all chinks carefully filled up with putty, and false screws put into the screw-holes. The whole, no doubt, looked most innocent.

It may interest those who play "patience," a game I only learnt for the nonce, and shall probably not play again till I am next in prison, to know that this day, before the news of the move came, I did the "Demon" five times out of six, and Le Mesurier did it three times in succession. It was the 15th of March — the Ides of March had come, and the omens were favourable. But as the Scots say, "Them as follows freits, freits follow," and I wanted something more material to go upon than the fall of a card. I should have mentioned that in addition to food we carried some money and other odds and ends. Cheques up to £10 could be cashed in Pretoria by a confiding agent.

Friday, 16th March.—Day at length came, a day that will live long in the memory of my two companions and myself. For the last time we heard the commandant going his rounds, and wondered anxiously if all were present. By 7 A.M. we had not heard of any one having hidden, and all seemed busy packing. Breakfast at 8, and then the prearranged signal was heard, and we knew that all were present. A little later we heard Frankland's voice saying, "All's well; good-bye!"

We now moved under the end room, and opening one of the closed-up ventilators, sat looking at what we could see of the prospect outside. The inspector of police, the commandant, and Dr Gunning were bustling about, looking extremely important, and waggons were arriving for baggage, and, after loading up, moving off. There was no mistake about this being a general move. All was proceeding exactly as we wished. The lady of the £25 fine passed by, looking as sympathetic as ever. By 10.15 all the officers had left the school, and no doubt were wending their way to the new habitation a mile off. The servants were still busy taking to pieces and loading beds. The din was very pleasant to our ears. A party of native con-

victs arrived, evidently to strike and remove the tents of the police.

About 12.15 P.M., all the baggage having left, the servants were marched off, and the sentries—their charges having gone—quitted their posts. We crept back under our own room, and as we were about to have some food, a number of policemen were heard above us in fits of laughter at the caricatures of President Kruger and others drawn on the wall by Frankland. From that time till 3.45, when the building became quieter, troops of people,—men, women, and children,—and also dogs, kept visiting the room above, and the sounds of hilarity continued. As the principal drawing, one of Lord Roberts personally pursuing the President from Bloemfontein, was on the wall immediately above the trap-door, no longer hidden by a bed, that entrance to our den was fully exposed to view. At 5 P.M. the last visitors arrived, and after that the building was deserted.

I have said that we had decided to go to Mafeking; but, thinking that after the period of inaction we had undergone the walk might be too much for us, we decided to go to Delagoa Bay, as by that route we might get a train. In December, before Churchill's escape, I had got temporary possession of a guide-book of the Delagoa Bay railway, and had committed to memory, in order, the thirty or forty stations on the line, the height of each above sea-level, and its distance from Pretoria. We had fairly accurate maps of the route, which seemed quite familiar to me. At six o'clock we had our final meal, and afterwards dressed for the journey.

It had been a bright and sunny day, and it would not be dark before 6.30, and there would be a moon. The end of our passive and the beginning of our active escape had come; but we experienced none of those feelings said to seize upon prisoners long confined, of regret at leaving their dungeon. Our one desire was to find ourselves upon the veldt.

(*To be continued.*)

A GLIMPSE OF ERIN.

SORLEY BOY'S TOWN.

"SEE Naples and die!" See Ballycastle and live — live as perhaps you never lived before, aglow to the finger-tips with a robust vitality born of sea and mountain, of cliff and glen, and pleasant murmuring stream. Such air! The breeze comes bowling in from Rathlin, bringing delicious scents of ocean, and, still insatiate, rushes up the valleys, robbing Glenshesk and Aura of their sweetest posies, then doubling back over Knocklayd, adds to its store the choice tributes of whin and heather, and swooping down Glentow, tosses its incomparable bouquet in your face as you walk along the Quay. This violates all the laws of the winds, you say. But Ballycastle is a *quare* place, and the winds "have a quare way of blowin' there from all arts and parts at oncest." You will soon get accustomed to its winds and its vocabulary, which is extensive and peculiar, and not at all inelegant. So buy a handbook of Ulster provincialisms, a reliable guide-book—Murray's for choice—and Moira O'Neill's delightful 'Songs of the Antrim Glens' to keep you from "thinkin' long," and lose no time in reaching Ballycastle. You will never regret your visit. To borrow its own graphic vernacular, it lies "aback o' beyant," and yet one may leave London by the night-mail and at three o'clock next afternoon find oneself gazing, from the window of the comfortable little Marine Hotel, at Rachray "over fornenst in the bay." For beauty of situation Ballycastle would be hard to beat. The view from the golf-links on a warm summer evening in early June beggars description. A splendid sea thundering against stupendous cliffs—a big kindly mountain, Knocklayd, looking down like a fond mother on the darling that nestles at her foot; Fair Head standing up proud and erect, like a sentinel on guard; Glenshesk and Glentow, vocal with many a song of rapturous thrush and fluting blackbird; out to sea the chalk cliffs of Rachray glistening in the sun; farther west the shapely white head of Kenban,—all contribute to make a perfect little picture. The old town, perched on the slope of a hill, is connected with the Quay, a quarter of a mile distant, by a noble avenue of trees, which have furnished material for the local poets' finest flights. "The Quay-road trees" inspire a fresh crop of breezy verse with each returning spring, and little wonder. The *sough* of the wind through their branches on a boisterous May morning would make even the most prosaic a bit heady.

New Ballycastle on the Quay is rising again phœnix-like from her ashes. Each year she is raising her head higher to-

wards the old fort of Dunanynie. Hugging the cliff at the Margy's mouth, little Margytown or Marketown, for as such she was known in former days, is the centre of a circle of gay admirers—Knocklayd, Rathlin, Fair Head, Glenshesk — and receives their homage with all the grace and dignity of a queen. And in sooth she is the queen of all the Glen country. Hers, too, is an ancient lineage, and she has passed through many strange vicissitudes. Talk of antiquity! Away "in the dark backward and abysm of time," when the world was still in its teens, Ballycastle had an attraction for tourists. We are told, on unimpeachable authority, that less than three hundred years after the Deluge, what time Abraham, a mere stripling, was counting his flocks on the plains of Charran, one Partholan, in search of rest and change, like a wise man came to Ireland and to Ballycastle. But his landing was a sorry one, for he lost his son Brecain in the treacherous swirl of *Sloch na morra.* Corrievreckan, or Brecain's caldron, has shifted its position farther to the north in later ages, and the name is now attached to the turbulent sea between Scarba and Jura on the Scottish coast,—

> "Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
> Still rings to Corrievreckan's roar."

But the spot where brave Brecain and his companions were engulfed—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*—was the channel between Rathlin island and the mainland, now fitly named *Sloch na morra*, "the gulp of the sea," a place most dreaded of mariners to the present hour.

To Partholan and his Fomorians succeeded the Firbolgs, a thousand years later, and they, too, must have patronised Ballycastle, for they fought a fierce battle at Murlough Bay some four miles distant, and a prettier scene of operations they could not have chosen. They were driven out by the Tuatha-De-Dananns, who excelled in magic and mystic lore. Was it not by her witcheries that Eefi, daughter of the De Danann king Bove Derg, metamorphosed the four beautiful children of Lir into four white swans, and set them wandering for three hundred years on the homeless *Sruth na Moyle*, the channel which runs between Fair Head and the Mull of Cantyre? While nearer home Carraig Uisnech, a conspicuous spit of rock running out to Rathlin, recalls the part little Marketown played in the Irish Iliad, and marks the spot where the sons of Usnach put in with their precious burden, Déirdre, our Irish Helen.

Carraig Uisnech, at the present day, is the bane of golfers. As you drive from the sixth tee for "Rathlin," it is almost directly in the line of sight, and is sure to catch the eye of the unwary and set him thinking of bygone things. And how can a man help foozling his drive as he conjures up a vision of the face that brought destruction on the towers of proud Emania and the Red Cross Knights.

After these children of the early prime the name of Sorley Boy reads like that of a modern up-to-date young gentleman. And yet it is close on three centuries and a half since Sorley Boy put his back to the wall in his stout fortress of Dunanynie, overlooking Marketown Bay, and bade defiance to all comers. There were always "boys" in Ireland, and there are still: and, their doughty deeds aside, they play a part in the language of the country. But of all the boys of his time Sorley was the greatest, and of all the Clandonnell he was the bravest and most capable. "Yellow Charles," or Charles the *Fair-haired*—for, after all, that is just what "boy" (the Irish *buidhe*) means—for over thirty years was the terror of the North, although his famous contemporary Shane O'Neill has somewhat overshadowed him in the eyes of posterity. Sorley came of a royal strain. Every Irishman, of course, has a drop of kingly blood in his veins. Sorley traced his lineage back to Colla Uais, "the noble," who was king of Ireland in the fourth century, through Sorley of Argyle, his distinguished namesake, a first-class fighting man, and the hammer of the Norwegian pirates. Sorley of Argyle built up the powerful kingdom of the Isles. His son, Donnell, from whom the Clandonnell take their name, and his successors, were Lords of the Isles. One of them, John Mor, came to Ireland in search of a wife, and wooed and won Margery Bysset, with whom the seven lordships of the Glens of Antrim passed to the Macdonnells. Never had fair woman a fairer dowry, although their charms were, perhaps, not so accessible in Margery Bysset's day as they are now. Our Sorley of a later date was an Ulsterman born and bred. Of his birthplace, Dunanynie Castle, only a few stones now remain to tell of "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago." The "fort of the fair" must have been a conspicuous object at one time, towering aloft over Ballycastle Bay. There Sorley grew up, the youngest of six sons, thinking the long thoughts of youth as he gazed out towards Rathlin, over the turbulent waters of the northern main, and trained from his cradle to regard killing and slaying as the chief trade and business of life. Rarely has a man been more thorough about his business. Ballycastle is well called "Sorley Boy's town." His name is writ large over it and the surrounding district. Through storm and sunshine he clung to the castle and the little bay, and at last, having survived all his enemies, in a ripe old age he died peacefully in his bed in Dunanynie, and was borne in splendid pomp from his stately home on the cliffs down the long slope of the Castle Hill, past the little quay to the quiet Abbey of Bun-na-margy, where he was laid to rest after his wild life of battle and bloodshed, while the Highlanders chanted their *coronach* and the Irish wailed out their mournful *caoine*, for he was loved and trusted of both.

Yes, Ballycastle was a stirring spot enough in the last half of the sixteenth century. Many a galley of "redshanks" put in at Port Brittas, and many a commando of Kerns and Galloglóghs swooped down the Glens to meet them, and many a man went down never to rise again within sight of the Margy shore. Sorley's programme was a full one. He harried the O'Cahans. He well-nigh exterminated the Mac-Quillans. The wide territory of Dalriada was stretched for him. He made more than one Lord-Deputy unhappy. But of all his foes, the toughest was Shane O'Neill, his rival clan-leader. "With the sword," said that proud chieftain, "I have won Ulster, and with the sword I will keep it." One corner of it, and that the fairest, he kept at a heavy price, for it finally cost him his life. It was a great day for Shane O'Neill, but an ill-starred day, as it finally turned out, when he fired Macdonnell's Castle at Red Bay, drove James and Sorley back from Cushendun over the mountains to the ancient town of Baile-caislein, and vanquished the flower of their soldiery on the green slopes of Glentow, where nowadays the most leisurely of locomotives drags its slow length along, and tries the patience of the expectant tourist. The facts which led up to that fight afford a fair illustration of the triangular duels which were so constant a feature of the Ireland of that period—clan against clan, and the English standing by, interested spectators of the struggle, and not above hitting the man who was down. The story of the preceding hundred years in Ulster was little more than a record of interminable squabbles between the superior chiefs and their *urriaghs* or subordinates. What strikes one most in the story of these wild lawless chieftains is their ever-readiness for fight. *Toujours prêt* was the motto of the Clandonnell, and they lived up to it. They were never caught napping. Fighting was their trade, and if through some chance they deviated now and then into peace, it was never for long. The circumlocutions and delays of modern diplomacy were alien to men whose hands were ever on their sword-hilts. They had neither the inclination nor the training for fighting battles on paper. Quick as lightning flash came the ultimatum. "Send me my rent," said O'Neill on a memorable occasion, "or if you don't——!" "I owe you no rent," was O'Donnell's quick retort, "and if I did——!" Then it was "*Lamh dearg aboo!*" and "*O'Donnell aboo!*" and in a trice they were at each other's throats in a Kilkenny-cat fight of extermination. And in a trice again they were ready to combine against their common enemy, the *bodach Sassanach.*

In the present instance, Shane, in his struggle with the English, endeavoured to secure the help of the Clandonnell, and failed. Then followed his feigned submission to Lord-Deputy Sussex, his

theatrical appearance at Court, and his sensational parade in London streets with his retinue of long-haired galloglasses. He returned to England as Captain of Tyrone, "Friend of the Queen of England, and enemy of all the world besides," vowing vengeance on the Glensmen who had played him false. The English were delighted, for Sorley was troubling them sore. Shane bided his time till the bulk of the fighting Ulster Scots were across the water; then he set out. For wiliness of tactics, for quickness of movement, he might have been a Boer commandant. He spent Easter 1565 at his castle near Dundalk. In two days he was at Edenduffcarrick, now Shane's Castle, on the shores of Lough Neagh, marching over twenty miles a-day, and literally carving his way, "so that x men may go in a ranck," through the biggest forest in Ulster — the Killultaghs. Another day's march brought him to Broughshane, where, in the Pass of Knockboy, Sorley first ventured to give him a taste of his quality, and afterwards repented him of his rashness. Knockboy (the Yellow Hill) claims acquaintance with another and a more modern general than Shane or Sorley. Only the other day a brave soldier came back there to enjoy a brief and well-earned rest, and to receive *ceud mile fáilte* from his admiring countrymen. The pleasant slopes reechoed once again to the clatter of horses' hoofs and the tread of marching feet; but this time it was a peaceful invasion. The Defender of Ladysmith was returning to his old home at Whitehall in the Braid valley, along the *Gleann-fada-na-Feine*, and the marching feet were those of the peace-promoting R.I.C., assembled, not to suppress a Fenian rising, but to prevent an exuberance of County Antrim loyalty and affection from killing Sir George with kindness.

After Sorley's repulse at Knockboy the beacon-fires on Torr Point and Benmore were lighted, Sorley's telegraphic system was set in motion, and the flames leapt forth to warn the Fir Chinntiré that trouble was brewing in the Glens. With speed James Macdonnell embarked every available cearnach and kern, but he reached Cushendun Bay with his fleet of galleys only to find his castle of Owderic razed to the ground, and Shane sweeping on flushed with victory. James and Sorley fell back on their old stronghold, Dunanynie. "On the morrow, being May Day, he (Shane) removed thence to a place called Nyw Castell in the Root, Sanhirly Boy his town." May 2nd 1565 was a black day for the Clandonnell. They were completely out-generalled, and committed the initial mistake of choosing to fight in the Glentow valley instead of holding to Glenshesk and the sea, from which they were hourly expecting reinforcements. Ere night fell, thirteen of their banners and ancients were captured, James and Sorley were prisoners, and seven hundred

of the clan lay dead on the fatal field.

One can picture Shane an Diomas, the Haughty, after refreshing himself with a hearty meal—"he was a great surfeiter and liberal in nothing but in housekeeping," and the Margy close at hand would furnish an excellent white trout—sitting down to indite, as he did before he slept, in irreproachable Latin, a modest recital of the day's doings for the information of Lord-Justice Arnold, signing, as was his wont, "*I am O'Neill.*" His treatment of his captives was brutal in the extreme, but ere long he reaped a terrible recompense. James, a man generally beloved, "a paragon of hospitality and prowess, a festive man of many troops," soon succumbed to his ill-usage. Sorley, more fortunate, lived to exult brutishly over his barbarous captor. Lord-Deputy Sidney was as strong as his predecessor Sussex had been weak. Shane was outwitted by this clever diplomatist, and, at last brought to bay, he had recourse to a desperate shift. He determined to throw himself on the mercy of the Ulster Scots, of all people in the world! *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.* For two years he led Sorley about in distinguished captivity like a white elephant. Through him negotiations were now opened with Alexander Oge, a younger brother of Sorley's, who had come over to Cushendun and was rendering Sidney good service in spoiling the O'Neill country. The Macdonnell camp was pitched on Ballytearim, a bare hill-slope overlooking Cushendun bay—"all the gold in Ballytearim is what's stickin' to the whin"—and there the momentous meeting took place, which was to terminate in such a ghastly tragedy, but, as seems natural in things Irish, there was a touch of comedy to lighten the gloom. A rich banquet was made ready to celebrate the reconciliation of the two clans. Huge beeves were slaughtered and wine ran in fountains, and Sorley enjoyed his liberty, and Shane came and made merry and satisfied his Gargantuan appetite. There is something refreshingly Hibernian about Shane's seeking the hospitality of his old foes, and being entertained literally and lavishly—at his own expense! For the good things with which he regaled himself had been seized but a few days before in a raid on his own territories, in which Alexander Oge carried off twelve hundred head of cattle. For two nights they feasted, but vengeance was at hand. A rumour was afloat of the intended marriage of O'Neill with James Macdonnell's widow. Shane's secretary was accused of circulating it. Hot words were used, and blows succeeded. Shane, flown with insolence and wine, espoused his secretary's quarrel, and spoke unadvisedly with his lips. In a moment a dozen skeans flashed in a dozen twitching hands, and proud Shane was left a lifeless corse, hacked to pieces on the hillside of Ballytearim. Captain Piers, with exquisite concern not to offend the delicate sensibilities of the Lord-Deputy,

pickled the head and sent it to Sidney, who sent it on to Dublin, there to be staked upon a pole, as rarer monsters were in those days.

Shane was gone, but Sorley was left, still vigorous and defiant, and such this grand old Viking remained till his latest day. He formed a league of the northern chiefs, which kept the Government in constant hot water. Sidney, anxious to appease him at any price, secured for him a royal grant of all the Glen country that belonged to the Byssets. Sorley graciously thanked him for nothing, and thrust the Queen's patent into a Dunanynie bonfire on the top of his sword. He knew exactly what he wanted, and he gave the English no peace till he recovered it—the fair land of the Route, which he had lost at Glentow. Then, having won the rubber, he made his peace with all the world, and was gathered to his fathers. Like Charles the Second, he was an unconscionable time a-dying—so Perrott must have thought—but the end came in 1590, and with Sorley's death the stirring history of old-time Ballycastle closes.

His successor, Randall, was cast in a less heroic mould. "To Amurath no Amurath succeeds." Randall found that fighting did not pay, and that coal-mines and salt-works and fisheries did when properly looked after. The "Ulster plantation" followed, and Randall took a prominent part in introducing English settlers and English customs, and fell away completely from the traditions of the clan, who were always proud to be "agin' the Government." The anglicising Randall had his reward, and died an earl. The anglicising process went on. Wars gave place to quieter pursuits, but the more permanent victories of peace are often unchronicled. In the next century, except at Rebellion time in '41, the annals of North-East Antrim are practically vacant.

In 1738 Ballycastle awoke to new life, thanks to the energy and enterprise of one man, Hugh Boyd. From the Earl of Antrim he received a grant in perpetuity of the coal pits, mines, &c., from Bun-na-margy to Fair Head, and from the sea-coast three miles into the country southward. Collieries are of little value unless their produce can be distributed. Mr Boyd turned his attention to the little bay, and at a cost of over £23,000—the Government helped him largely—Boyd's Harbour was built. In less than a generation, through his increasing zeal and industry, he raised an insignificant village—it numbered at that time fifty souls all told, and there were just four householders at the Quay—to the dignity of a thriving town and centre of commerce. He built a church, erected furnaces, foundries, salt-works, glass-works, tanyards, breweries, bleaching and weaving establishments. As many as twenty vessels, most of them the property of local residents, were engaged in the trade of the port. Mr Boyd did all that a man could do. But he was flying in the face of Nature,

and she shrieked back at him in fury in her wild nor'-west gales. The bed of the Margy was changed in its course, and all to no purpose. The mouth of the harbour choked up with sand, and expel her as he would, inexorable Nature still returned to frustrate his best efforts. "There rolls the deep where grew the tree"—at Ballycastle it is the other way. Where once rolled the deep—rolled as it only can roll in Port Brittas—the visitor at the Marine Hotel now saunters forth to enjoy his matutinal pipe in the hotel grounds; and where Mr Boyd's goodly merchant-vessels once discharged their cargoes at the inner dock, lithe striplings and graceful maidens now beguile the time with tennis and badminton and afternoon tea. The local antiquarians have a pretty quarrel with these irreverent children of the latest day who, a few years ago, to make a good sod for their tennis-court, did not shrink from ruthlessly carting away the old fairy mound of Dunrainey, which stood near the bridge, and for centuries had resisted the shocks of time, crammed full of legend and romance, and venerated alike by Pagan and Christian, Firbolg and Fomorian, MacQuillan and Macdonnell. Mr Boyd had good reason to curse "the iniquities of Marketown Bay," for they prevailed against him sore. His good works, alas! perished with him. His peculiar distribution of his property precluded his successor from launching out into any big expense, and the excellent machine which he had constructed, being "left without any permanent principle of motion," soon came to a dead stop. The glass-works were neglected, the breweries mismanaged, the coal-mines fell in or were flooded with water, and as the scribe of a century ago quaintly puts it, shortly "nothing was left to view but the melancholy ruins of old Mr Boyd." But even to the present hour faint traces of the former splendours of the Boyd period remain. The internal structure of the Marine Hotel is a Chinese puzzle to the uninitiated. It becomes quite simple on learning that the present coffee-room was old Ballycastle's custom-house. Between the tennis-ground and the Margy there is a pleasant mound where country trippers go up to watch the waves. This is Glass Island, and until a few years ago the Glass house, an old brick tower, at a later date made a receptacle for kelp, stood there. The "Salt pans" near Bath Lodge are the favourite objective of an after-dinner stroll, while some of the older inhabitants are fond of talking about the site of the present coastguard station as "the Margy mór," where the big market was held in old days. "Ay! man, that *was* a market!" (although they themselves had never seen it).

Young Ballycastle is beginning to forge ahead again. Its vigorous, self-reliant people feel that they have a reputation to sustain, and something to recover; and they are going the right way about making

the most of their town, and developing one of its most important assets, the extreme beauty of its surroundings. They have studied to a nicety the art of entertaining the stranger within their gates. Search Ireland through, a country justly famed for its civility and courtesy to strangers, and you will not find a kindlier, more "civil-spoken" people than the good folk of Ballycastle. Nor is this warm-hearted friendliness confined to those whose business it is to be pleasant and friendly, "to make it pay." It is a characteristic of all classes, none the less remarkable that it is found in the county of Antrim, which is said to pay little heed to æsthetics, and to hold lightly by the amenities of life. A "County Entherim man" has a reputation for being a sullen dour fellow, not altogether nor in all cases undeserved. When his more affable, cheery fellow-countryman of the south, with his *sootherin'* way, wants to say hard things about the "hard northern," the two stones he invariably flings at him are his cold manner and his aggressive Ulster accent. At Ballycastle you will meet with no frigidities either of manner or of speech, you will always get a "good morra kindly!" and if you are interested in such things, you will have direct experience of perhaps the richest and most varied dialect in the whole kingdom. Nor is this surprising when one recalls the numerous bands of strangers who have found a footing along the coast, from the early Grecian colony of the magic-loving De Dananns to "the Plantation" of James I. and the later Scottish and English settlements. Nowhere in Ireland may one meet with such linguistic surprises, the hard hybrid language of the Ulster Scots breaking out side by side with the softer, more liquid, "old tongue" of the Glensfolk, just as the great whin dykes of basalt stand out round the coast in marked contrast with the softer limestone.

The visitor to Ballycastle is a prey to perplexity, but it is of a pleasing kind. There are so many things clamouring for attention, grand things, beautiful things, that must not be passed by. This is not the least of its charms, endless variety. It caters for every taste, and carries every vote. It is a very heaven for archæologists, starred as it is with antiquities in almost every field and townland. Geologically, there is not a more interesting spot in Ireland, for that matter in Europe. Botanists are never happier than when they are on Fair Head; that same bold promontory has a strange fascination for the cliff-climber. The humble old-fashioned pedestrian, who is getting out of favour somewhat in these degenerate days of bicycles and motor-cars, when a man will use any means of propulsion rather than his legs—the old-fashioned pedestrian, who, after all, is the only man who thoroughly knows his country, has a true fairyland of delight before him in the nine glens of Antrim. In cool Glen Shesk, in lone Glen Dun, he may find

many a sequestered nook where under the chestnuts it will be unalloyed happiness to live lightly for an hour and drink oblivion of the cares of life amid the fragrant hanging bells of the hyacinths and the wood anemones and all the sweet and virginal glen flowers. Or away up on the mountain slopes of old Luirgedan and Trostan, dark with heather, he may bask in the sunshine the livelong day, and inhale that rarest of all scents, the scent of the mountain top, which has something moral as well as physical about its tonic, for it humbles a man at the same time that it elevates him, and makes him feel less grimy! Those who have the heart, and the head, and the perfect anatomy for it, may spend a day on Rachray (let us hope it will not be more!), where they will see strange sights, strange birds, and strange people, for the Rachray man is a creature apart. There has been no more civilising influence at work on the Celtic fringe in recent years than golf. In little more than a decade it has improved Portrush out of recognition. It has introduced to the choicest bits of Donegal and Clare many to whom Ireland and things Irish were an ugly nightmare. At Ballycastle golfers have no cause to grumble. The old rabbit-warren has been judiciously utilised for a sporting little nine-hole course, and the greens compare favourably with those at more pretentious places. Nor are the gentle followers of Izaak Walton neglected. Visitors at the hotel have free fishing in the Margy, Shesk, and Carey rivers and in the lakes on Fair Head. More than once has an expert angler, in half an hour before breakfast, without so much as wetting his toes or walking a mile for his sport, furnished a fine dish of white trout for the hotel table. And, paradox as it may seem to describe a place on the circumference as a centre of anything, the cyclist could not do better than make Ballycastle his headquarters for a week. He may fare forth as far as Larne to the south on the famous coast road; to the north and west an easy day's journey will include Carrick-a-raide, Ballintoy, Whitepark Bay, Dunseverick, Portrush and the Causeway, Bushmills and Coleraine, both famous for their potent and potable waters; inland he may reach the head of most of the Glens, and extend his incursions to include the Round Tower at Antrim, Shane's Castle and its beautiful park along Lough Neagh, the Bann shore, Ballymena and the Braid valley; and after all, and best of all, he can get back at night to hear the shriek of the pebbles drawn down by the tide at the Margy's mouth, and see the moon come up rich and warm out of the mists of Ocean over the Quay.

Holiday-making, like many more of the good things of life, is mainly a personal matter. A stranger may not intermeddle with our joy. To draw up another man's programme savours somewhat of impertinence, and is sure to be a thankless task. Yet it is not impossible to outline a skeleton which others

may clothe with flesh and blood according to their individual fancies. In suggesting such a skeleton for Ballycastle, the difficulty is to decide what to exclude. But let us without more ado put Ballycastle's infinite variety to the test. Pride of place, as of time, belongs to the antiquarian. Bun-na-margy, Goban Saer's castle, and Dunanynie will fill up the forenoon. After lunch we may go farther afield. The Franciscan Friary of Bun-na-margy was founded probably in the early part of the sixteenth century by MacQuillan, Lord of the Route; and those who would know all about it will find the story gracefully told in a special number of the 'Ulster Journal of Archæology' (1898). At the west end of the church there is an old cross still standing, which is supposed to mark the grave of Julia MacQuillan, the famous "Black Nun of Bun-na-margy." Strange tales are still told up the Glens of her wonderful deeds of piety and penance. Her spirit, they say, still haunts the crumbling ruin; and intrepid and romantic folk in search of adventure still go forth on moonlight nights and keep their lonely vigil behind the monastery walls to see the Black Nun "walk." The Friary has harboured in its time less gentle lodgers than the Black Nun—the warrior and his war-horse. Many a time its peaceful aisles resounded with the din of battle. In its open cemetery hundreds of the Clandonnell who fell in fight lie sleeping.

About two miles up Glen Shesk, on the left bank of the river—it is a thorny and a rocky path that leads to it—are the remains of Goban Saer's castle, the great wonder-working architect who is credited with having built the Round Towers of Ireland. Not much now survives to suggest the former greatness of old Dunanynie, just enough to show how great and massive its architecture must have been to weather the storms which burst full upon it from the northern channel. It may be reached either by the straight road up the Castle Hill, or by the cliff walk to Clare Park—one of the most enjoyable rambles in the neighbourhood for those who have strong heads—past the coastguard station and Craig-na-Scarf and Portnagree. Unfortunately this path will soon be impossible. Industry and the pursuit of the picturesque, as often, are in antagonism, and a new limestone-quarry blocks the way. Yet those who persist and win through will have their reward. The cliffs and the caves round this headland are well worth exploring, and many traditions cling to them. Search out some old *shannachie*—they are getting rarer every day—and set him talking of old-time memories. It will be strange if he has not some interesting tales to tell of Cairn-dhu and the Hawk's Nest, and the Robber's Cave, where brave Kathleen Græme brought food to the bold outlaw MacAnair. The path winds up the cliff till it ends almost on the lawn in front of Clare Park. To the owner of Clare Park, a gentle-

man well known in Ulster yachting circles, New Ballycastle owes much. On Craig-na-Scarf, the meeting-place of the cormorants, he built a new pier at a cost of £6000. To many it seemed a quixotic venture. The mordacious winter seas have barked and yelped and gnawed at it for some years now. The owner smilingly repairs the ravages, and the little pier still stands. His benefactions did not end there. He designed and built the steamer Glentow, which makes frequent crossings to and from the English and Scottish ports, bringing coals, timber, salt, slates, and manures, and taking back gravel, sand, limestone, and kelp. He is opening up new limestone-quarries, and is one of the chief promoters of a company which is at present working the Coal-Measures on the east of the bay, where some important developments are expected. Antiquarians may also put a pleasant circle round Knocklayd, if they are not ambitious enough to go to the top to search for the graves of the three Danish princesses. At the head of Glenshesk, where the prospect widens, the natives will point out "MacQuillan's Grave"—*the* MacQuillan, of course — but wherever you find a raised bit of earth in the valley of the Shesk, it is fairly safe to conjecture that the bones of some MacQuillan have mouldered to dust beneath it.

At Armoy, the eastern plain, St Patrick founded one of his earliest churches. Its chief attraction now is its Round Tower, next to the Antrim tower the most important in Ulster. These interesting memorials of the past are not numerous in the northern province. Near the village, in *Lag-a-veist*, the hollow of the monster, you may see the hole from which some giant of old, whose temper was volcanic, lifted the island of Rathlin, and dropped it into its present position! There is a souterrain at Armoy, and a cashel worth seeing at the Knockans, and on the way home down Glentow it is possible to make out the sites of three great duns or fortresses, the most important of which, Dun-Taise, is supposed to have given the glen its name. *Taise Taobhgheal*, or Taise of the White Side, was a most bewitching young lady, daughter of Donn, King of Rachray, "the most handsome of the children of Adam," and many suitors came to woo her from distant climes. But she had plighted her troth to Congal of the Flat Nails, and they were celebrating their nuptials in princely fashion in her father's island-home—Rachray is still famous for its weddings — when the imperious King of Norway, Nabghodon, came swooping down with his splendid speckled sails on its northern coast, determined to carry off Taise at all costs. Then there was a terrible to-do. All night the battle raged, and at dawn began a Homeric encounter between Congal and his rival. They fought with "the courage of two lions, the ferocity of two bears, and the strength of two oxen," and at the close of the day the victory fell to Congal. The

nuptials were completed, and Donn settled on his daughter a cantred on the mainland reaching to Dunseverick, "and built for her a fortress called Dun-Taise; and Dun-Taise is the name of that whole tract of country still." The rest of this pretty tale of Taise and her martial lovers is written in the book of 'The Battles of Congal Clarainech,' where he who has a good knowledge of Irish may read.

Whitepark Bay and Dunseverick demand a day to themselves. Whitepark was without doubt an important settlement of primitive man. It has been perhaps the greatest hunting-ground in Ireland for those in search of relics of the Stone Age. Flints, arrow-heads, stone hatchets, hammer-stones, flakes, scrapers were once plentiful as blackberries; but he who would make a fresh discovery nowadays must be up early and wide-awake, for successive bands of pilgrims have practically carried away the bay! There is at least one collector in the county who could restore a fair share of it. His house is packed from cellar to garret with its treasures, and when he wants a holiday he generally selects Whitepark, because, as he can truly and literally say, he is quite at home there.

Geologists will find unending interest in every mile of the coast in watching the uneven fight between the limestone and the basalts. But there are one or two points nearer home which are well worthy of their attention: the promiscuous mass of sandstone, coals, iron-ore, &c., on the east of Ballycastle Bay, and the uncanny dry lake away on the top of the hill-road going over to Cushendall—a weird and desolate spot, where the water has an unhappy way of bubbling up mysteriously and unexpectedly from Heaven knows where, and disappearing again just as mysteriously. No one can tell, not even the geologists, whence it cometh or whither it goeth. Probably the fairies have something to do with it. The little green-clad horsemen of "the gentry" are said to ride there on star-lit nights.

A day at the Causeway, a day on Rachray, and a day on Fair Head are each and all inevitable if one would do the district thoroughly. The Causeway should be visited by the coast-road, hilly though it be. The inland route is dreary and uninteresting. The other way there are fresh delights at every turn—Kenban, most imposing of cliffs; Carrick-a-raide, the rock in the road of the salmon, with its swinging rope-bridge, no place for giddy people if the wind is blowing or there is only one plank down; Larryban Bay, the bay of the white half fort—seaward it required no fortifying, for Nature had done its work well; the big hill of Knocksoghey (cyclists, dismount!); Ballintoy, the most northerly village, abounding in children and dogs; Sheep Island, which grazes just the round dozen of sheep, neither more nor less—if more, they die of starvation; if less, of their own too much!—Whitepark and

Dunseverick and the Pleaskin. If you happen to be there at the right season the bean-flowers' boon is with you all the way on this ride, and an exquisite odour it is. Later in the year, in August and early September, the bouquet is of a different order. For then "the shamrock is in flower!" a euphemistic way of saying the flax is a-steeping. Pheugh! Of all classified smells the smell of an Irish flax-dam after the steeping stands lowest in the category. But the ozone coming in over Pleaskin Head will soon steep it —even it—in oblivion. After Pleaskin, the Causeway. There are things—some of the grandest things—which will not be circumscribed by language. The Causeway is one. Glenariff, winding to the sea, is another.

Who goes to Rathlin must choose his day and his boatman. Without confidence in both he can hardly dare to be happy. It is just seven miles across from the boat-slip at Ballycastle to Church Bay, and willing hands will "run you over in no time." If one could spare it, a week would not be too much to devote to that "Irish stockinge, the toe of which pointeth to the mainlande." The Rachray men are "fightin' and fishin' and tearin' away" just as they did in the good—or bad—old times; but their crimes cannot be serious, for there is not a magistrate nor a policeman nor a doctor among them. Once a-month a police patrol from the mainland visits the island by way of keeping up its local knowledge; but in Rachray, one imagines, a police patrol must go softly. Until lately the kelp was the Rachray man's pig—it paid the rent for him. But prices have been falling off heavily, and where £5 a-ton was once paid, it will not now fetch half that sum. Kelp-burning, fishing, and farming in a small way are the only industries. A Scottish company is just beginning to work the limestone. The land problem never troubled the islanders. There have always been good tenants, and good landlords, in Rachray. In the late Mr Gage's time Rachray was an absolute monarchy. Mr Gage had a grand way with his subjects, and kept them in "grand order." He was *de facto* king, for he combined in himself all the functions of government—administrative, judicial, and executive; but the sceptre he wielded was a kindly one, and his people gave him a more affectionate title, "master." They say you can tell a Kenramer man from an Ushet man, a west islander from an east islander; the latter is more up-to-date, from mixing in society! One would have thought that a Rachray man, east or west, was a stay-at-home person, willy-nilly, at the best of times. The estranging gulf that roars between him and Ireland does not foster social intercourse. Ireland is always for him a foreign country, and his heaviest curse is, "May Ireland be your hinder end!" But once a-year at any rate he shakes off his insularity and takes a foreign trip — goes abroad, in fact—to the Big Lammas Fair

at Ballycastle. Och! it's there that there used to be no end of ructions in bygone days, when for a wild week the Quay-road was given over to revels and hilarity, and the most promiscuous crowd that could be gathered together within the four corners of Ireland—ballad-singers, tumblers, pipers, blind fiddlers, thimble-riggers, Islay men, Jura men, Ushet and Kenramer men, Glensmen, and Scots from the Braid — all jabbering with an exuberance and variety of language truly pentecostal. Those week-long glories have faded, the Big Fair is now a two-day event, but it is still incomplete without a screed of the pipes or a scrape of the fiddle and a rousing eight-hand reel under the trees; for every Rachray *bouchal* and every *girsha ruadh* loves a reel, and they will dance till the moon comes up over the waters to light them home.

The climber is hard to please who will not be satisfied with the cliffs round Fair Head and the *Cosan an Fhir Leith*, the path of the dread Grey Man of the Northern Sea, who haply, like the giant Hymir, split these stupendous basalts asunder with the glance of his eye, and then tossed in sport across the chasm that colossal pillar which fills with awe him who passes under it. Murlough Bay is a gem set in the most rugged surroundings, and those who approach it from above—it bursts full on the view without a moment's warning—fall hopelessly in love at first sight.

The cyclist needs no finger-posts to point the way. No ridable road in the district should be neglected, but there is one particular route which may be commended, and which may escape him, for guide-books have not got it in their list. It lies up Glenshesk to Armoy, thence to the left round the slopes of Aura into Glendun, down Glendun to Cushendun, and home by the switchback coast-road, past Runabay, Torr Point, and Murlough. At the viaduct in Glendun he may deviate to the right three miles or so and make a pleasant break at Cushendall, in that excellent and homely hostelry, the Glens of Antrim Hotel, much sought and much bepraised by all travellers. It is a hard day's work, and there is plenty of hard riding, but it is worth it all. It embraces much of what is best and most characteristic in the Antrim coast scenery — two happy glens, green as an emerald, green as they only are in Ireland, a real Irish solitude, a typical Irish village, and a typical Irish corner, full of quaint old-worldly things and people, and wotting little of the on-rush of the centuries.

There are rumours of a peaceful invasion of Ireland this year by those in search of pleasure. Let them come,—come in their thousands! As soon as they set foot on her shores, captive Erin will captivate her invaders. From the charm of her magic there is no escape.

WILLIAM J. HARDY.

MORE ABOUT RETRIEVERS.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR HENRY SMITH, K.C.B.

HAS it ever occurred to any one, I wonder, how similar in many respects the Doones of Bagworthy, in the time of Judge Jeffreys, were to the Boers of the Transvaal in the reign of Queen Victoria? Ignorant, cruel, and treacherous, owning allegiance to none, seldom leaving their own dominions but for some act of aggression, constant and inveterate snipers, yet eminently quiet according to their own showing, and fair and just to every one. It was John Ridd's father, "a robber of great size and strength," who met his death in an attempt to "get the goods of four or five of our most peaceful gentlemen." "The Counsellor" was a thief, a hypocrite, and a liar, who might run in couples with the most portentous scoundrel of modern times, the "President." Carver and Cronje would make another pretty pair. Glen Doone was a stronghold impregnable as the trenches of Magersfontein: a frontal attack ended in disaster, horses and men being slaughtered at close quarters. It was only after months of weary waiting, when reinforcements arrived, and Jeremy Stickles and Tom Faggus, both grievously wounded, had returned to duty, that a day of reckoning came. When Cronje, that murderous brute, emerged from his death-trap, his only request was for kind treatment. With the blood of the 94th and other deeds of villainy on his guilty conscience, well he knew it was the last thing he deserved; yet he got what he asked for without stint. Had a "gay Gordon" laid him on his back in his own unsavoury surroundings, with the admonition given by John Ridd to Carver Doone, "lie low in thy native muck," some, even of the best of us, would have indorsed the action. But all this *par parenthèse.*

For years past we have had war, war, nothing but war; war brought to a successful termination in one quarter; war dragging its weary length along in another; war threatened in a third; casualties and aching hearts in every household, — a veritable nightmare has been ever before us. For years to come I fear me much we shall have nothing but army reform, improved explosives, and courts of inquiry. To endeavour to create a diversion is surely excusable: to sandwich in something of our old life between all this and "our coming peril" is, I fondly hope, a meritorious act.

Dining out one cold night in December shortly after our most dreadful reverse, when the gallant Wauchope, who feared God, but feared nothing else, fell with his boys around him, war conversation was by common consent barred; but—try hard as every one did—after

a few sentences it drifted back into the old groove, till our host, who had done his utmost, got perfectly desperate. "Will no one talk of 'the shires' for half an hour?" he asked piteously. It reminded me of a scene over fifty years ago, when I found myself after a long day's fishing at the hospitable board of a Border laird and large sheep-farmer. Cold, wet, and weary, but with a good string of trout—we didn't run to baskets in those days—what the occasion was I cannot remember: possibly the "preachings," for the parish minister was strongly in evidence. For an hour and a half the talk was of stipends, fiars prices, and chalders. Any attempt to "turn the position," or change the subject, was promptly defeated: and back we went to the last meeting of the presbytery, or the next meeting of the General Assembly. The old laird himself had made some gallant frontal attacks, only to fall back with serious loss; but while he suffered much, he, as others have since done, gained in experience. Bringing discretion to bear on the situation, abandoning the idea of hurling himself against the boulders, he lay low and bided his time. There is a period of the evening when the mind of the Scot turns lightly to thoughts of toddy. The compounding of this ennobling beverage demands our undivided attention. A coat that does not adapt itself to one's figure at the first try on is seldom a success. It may, by reason of much alteration, become a decently fitting garment; but we are never happy in its possession. So it is with the national stimulant: unless properly mixed in the first instance, it is always disappointing. If at the beginning of the evening, owing to carelessness or want of attention, two or three tumblers are—as used occasionally to be the case with the late Mr Brummell's ties—"failures," accept defeat; drink them off, and try again. This is the custom which obtains among the dwellers in the debatable land; and the gravity of the situation when the kettle is brought in no one seeks to minimise. The laird's time had arrived. When every man had selected one or two lumps of sugar, according to taste, and, having added the requisite amount of hot water towards its liquification, was, before pouring in the whisky, listening intently till the boil, temporarily suspended during its progress round the table, was re-established, he brought his hand down on the polished mahogany, and with a smothered oath ejaculated, "Lorrrd sake, was nane o' ye at the Lockerbie lamb fair?"

"Plus je vois les hommes, plus j'admire les chiens." Three years ago I wrote of Retrievers in the columns of 'Maga,'[1] many thought—for the article attracted a considerable amount of attention—far too favourably of the flat-

[1] 'Maga' for June 1897, "Retrievers, and how to break them."

coated or smooth race constantly seen on the show bench, calling attention in particular to their extraordinary temper. It is gratifying to find my opinion indorsed by the 'Field,' the highest authority on sport we have. In an article entitled "Trials for Retrievers and Spaniels," that paper in its issue of 23rd December 1899 says: "It must be accepted that, so far as the two varieties go, we have the usual survival of the fittest. By repeated and careful crossing . . . an animal has been produced of great sagacity and gentleness." The curly "is not so gentle and good-tempered," and "is inclined to be hard-mouthed." "The flat-coats won all the prizes, and without any difficulty either." In continuation of the article I quote from, the 'Field' goes on to say: "Let the scoffers at show dogs bear in mind that most of the best-working flat-coated retrievers are from so-called exhibition strains; that all the winners last week were of that blood; and that at any rate two of them are quite likely to win bench prizes." If one can have working qualities and good looks combined, why not? A horse is none the worse because he is a well-shaped one —"handsome is as handsome does." A horse-dealer in the south, not of my acquaintance, and possibly not of any one else's—but the fact remains, I was told the story—was showing a hunter to an intending purchaser, a member of the House long threatened, but still, in the language of the besieged, "going strong." "There's an 'orse, my lord," he exclaimed. "Look at his shape, my lord; look at him in front, look at him be'ind. There, my lord, there's scimitar!" "Scimitar," said his lordship, who was given to profanity, "what the ——'s scimitar?" "Scimitar," replied the dealer in rather a contemptuous tone of voice, implying, "I thought you'd have known that, anyway"—"Scimitar, my lord, make and shape"!

Contrast an animal such as the 'Field' describes with the retrievers we read of in 'The Scientific Education of Dogs for the Gun.' "H. H.," the author, tells us of one that "struggled, whined, howled, barked, and tried to bite"; of another "standing at bay"; and of a "fight such as I never had with a dog in my life." He goes on to say that he "can generally hold a dog, however savage, by the collar, without being bitten; but recommends you, if you are at all afraid, to take him by the tail, "looking out for your legs." This worthy gentleman appears to have broken his dogs at the risk of his life. Doubtless the element of danger, which makes "'unting" so fascinating to its votaries, was an attraction to him. Personally I am at issue with H. H. Though prepared for a man-eater in the jungle, I object to being mauled among the domestic turnips. Looking on grouse- and partridge-shooting as eminently peaceful pursuits, I like to think, when leaving with my dogs in the morning, that I have a fairly good chance of getting home in the evening

without the aid of a "stretcher party." A foxhound, as every sportsman knows, if caught in a trap or suffering pain from an injury, is most dangerous to approach: even if you assist him out of a difficulty—say from a pit or hole where, but for you, he would probably be drowned—he will show his gratitude by biting you. Pointers, setters, and spaniels, though not quite so ready with their teeth, will, under similar circumstances, bite not only strangers but their own masters without scruple. The flat-coated retriever is totally dissimilar in this respect, and can be handled without the slightest risk. I have got them out of all sorts of difficulties, and never once met with injury. In doing so you may fearlessly let their head rest on your shoulder, or lie against your face. Quite recently a valuable dog of mine got hung up in a wire-fence, and a dislocation of the stifle or some serious injury seemed imminent. Running up, I lifted him bodily, struggling and terrified as he was; yet the idea of biting occurred neither to the helper nor the helped.

It is all the more provoking, seeing the material they have to work on, that the vast majority of keepers will bring no intelligence whatever to bear on the subject. The contrast between huntsmen and gamekeepers—I mean, as regards their management of dogs, their care and attention, their ability to detect disease, and their ability to treat disease when detected — is extraordinary. You may safely say, speaking roughly, the former are capable men; the latter, with notable exceptions—proving the rule—incapable. The reason is not hard to discover. Hunting men are constantly at their kennels: shooting men never look near them. By hunting men I mean masters of hounds, very many of whom are themselves indefatigable workers, capable on an emergency of taking the place of their huntsmen either on the flags or in the field. Often and often I have seen keepers attempt to give a dog medicine and fail. By the time they have their preparations completed — two men in most instances being considered necessary for the operation—the patient is thoroughly frightened. If he is being practised on for the first time, he doesn't understand the proceedings; if not for the first time, he does, and makes up his mind to fight it out under either condition. If he is a big strong dog, he generally comes off victorious; if a little one, he wriggles like an eel, the result being precisely similar. "He got maist o't that time ony way," one practitioner says to the other in a congratulatory tone, after a protracted struggle, only to discover that the recipient of "the maist o't," if a liquid, is his own unmentionables. If attempted to be administered in the form of a pill, the patient deftly gets quit of it as soon as his head is loose, and the bolus is displayed to view careering gaily along the floor. I remember, long before I understood all this, taking a sick dog up to "the

kennels." I was shown into a small parlour, where I was almost immediately joined by the huntsman, a long-legged, hollow-thighed, hard-riding individual, hailing from the county of many acres, and dressed in the orthodox garment down to his heels, clean, white, and wholesome. "Does he bite, sir," I was asked, after telling him the object of my visit. "I won't guarantee him," I replied. "Then take a hold of him by the collar, if you please, sir." In two seconds thereafter the patient's nose was turned towards the roof of the room, and the pill which the huntsman had decided on giving him down his throat, past all chance of return; and two minutes after that I was on the road for home, not without refreshment, the sick dog trotting by my side, and wondering, no doubt, at the way a stranger had bested him.

It is an excellent plan to accustom your puppies when quite young to have both liquids and solids administered to them. You can practise them with bread pills, or milk, or soup; and they soon get used to have anything put down their throats, and give no trouble whatever if you find it necessary to treat them when suffering from one or other of the ailments to which they are liable. Liquids, I need hardly add, should not be passed over the throat at once, but given gradually by the lips.

The contrast, again, between huntsmen and keepers may be further exemplified.

When the young entry is feathering beautifully on a scent, possibly of a cat — no animal, as Beckford says, more useful for educational purposes —and giving early promise of rising to distinction, you don't allow a "whip" to dash out and cut them over, even though their legitimate quarry is not in front of them: another opportunity for correction is taken, when, having mastered the art of hunting, they must be shown what it is they are expected to hunt. It is in cases such as this, where irreparable mischief may be done by a flogging, that the average keeper breaks down. At a grouse-drive in Scotland, one grand October day, a keeper from Lancashire was present with his master, a guest at the Lodge, as I was. This keeper was breaking, or attempting to break, a retriever —one of the real sort, dark in the eye, and with the unmistakable expression of intelligence, good temper, and tractability. I soon got acquainted with the man and his charge; and on our way to the butts I learned that the animal was a favourite, and was "shaping nicely," but —and it was rather an important but—that it was with great difficulty he could be induced to carry anything. "He did carry a bird, the other day, fairly well," the keeper added, "and I'm in hopes of him yet." Presently we parted, the man being commandeered as a driver,—a necessary adjunct to the sport, and sometimes as difficult to find in remote districts as a remount in French's ride to Kimberley. The moor had been driven *usque ad nauseam* as far

as the birds were concerned: they had had enough of it for the season, and wouldn't "face the music"; and we were eagerly waiting the advent of the drivers, to pick up the few killed and try it the other way, when, owing to the quarter the wind was in, we expected to do better. Before I could detect either man or flag, I caught sight of a dog galloping wildly about, and heard a whistle being blown, as I thought only the boots of a Jermyn Street hotel could blow it, the whistler, in a minute or two, appearing, advancing on us, in military parlance, at the double. (The animal—the retriever, to wit, as I was afterwards to discover — hearing shooting in front, had taken advantage of the gross carelessness of his custodian, slipped his collar, and bolted.) Careering about, wild with excitement, in front and rear of where I was stationed, the dog presently came on a bird, my only victim, picked it up at once, and stood still, holding it beautifully. "Deil, but your dog's weel entered wi' the vermin now, sir," I said to myself, and wondered what would happen next. I was not long kept in suspense. Descrying his master, some fourteen stone, more or less, of perspiring humanity, proud beyond measure, and confident that caresses would be his portion, the dog galloped up, still retaining his prey—was seized by the neck, and promptly flogged!

Mr Wheler, the Duke of Northumberland's agent at Alnwick, formerly with Colonel Cornwall Legh in Cheshire, than whom few men have had more experience, was good enough to send me lately his pamphlet 'On Breaking Retrievers,' which he had written for the use of the Duke's keepers. I had no idea till last autumn that such a pamphlet was in existence; and I was all the more pleased on receiving it to find that his views and my own coincide in nearly every particular.

"Good all-round retrievers are rare," Mr Wheler says, "and almost impossible to buy; as when a man is lucky enough to possess one, he is unwilling to sell. Yet well-bred puppies are a drug in the market, which do not pay to breed. Many men will tell you that most of them are worthless, whereas the fault generally lies with those who do not know how to break them, or will not take sufficient trouble with them. Many think that breaking must be done by much thrashing. . . . Yet, as a matter of fact, the whole of their teaching consists of loud whistling and shouting, with a whipping at pretty frequent intervals. Dogs so taught may be broken after a fashion, but their spirits are also broken: they take no interest in their work, and are worthless."

It is subject for regret that Mr Wheler's pamphlet was for private circulation only: good as Mr Bevan's little work is, it falls far short of Mr Wheler's in practical utility.

With such a man as Mr Wheler at the head of affairs, it is not much to be wondered at that really good retrievers are not unfrequently met with at Alnwick; and, curious to say, not only in his day, but before it, this *rara avis* was not unknown there. Nearly thirty years ago a friend of

mine bought from the then head-keeper a dog rejoicing in the euphonious name of "Oscar." As regards looks Oscar was a fairly handsome specimen, but over long in the leg, or, as fanciers say, "with a bit too much daylight under him." As regards work, he was as good a retriever as one would wish to see—and yet he made mistakes. I shot over him, as far as I remember, for six seasons constantly, and I am confident he did not commit himself on an average more than twice per annum. Desperately keen though he was (and his keenness he retained till almost too old to work), he would stand at the hottest of corners, with pheasants and ground-game running all round him, and never move: yet I have seen him chase a hare, and one, moreover, that had never been fired at, to the very horizon, and not reappear for, say, five or six minutes. It shows the extraordinary and uncontrollable impulse in a keen and not over-broken dog to chase, and how unsound I was in advising only that "in their second season they must be carefully watched." During their whole career, Mr Wheler suggests, would have been infinitely better advice to give, and there is no doubt he is right.

It was amusing to see Oscar's tactics after disgracing himself. When he came to his senses he would make an enormous circuit, keeping a hundred and fifty yards away till he got well behind the keeper, then letting himself down on his legs till he was as low as a spaniel, he would gradually creep forward to his proper place. I suspect he had had a good many castigations during his education; but this keeper, a very good man, understood the animal, and never flogged him. "Silly brüt, what's come ower ye the day?" he would remark, without even turning round, when he was conscious of a repentant sinner immediately behind him. Oscar would then resume his original dimensions: his tail, moving in a hesitating, not to say cringing, manner, would wag demonstratively; and the good old dog would go on possibly till the end of the season without one fault, though this flagrant exhibition may have happened in the month of September or October. Oscar was a curious exemplification of devotion to the gun, totally irrespective of the party carrying it; and notwithstanding the flaw in his character to which I have called attention, of a determination to do his duty even should his temporary master be of such tender years as to be incapable of inspiring any dog of character either with awe or respect. Oscar was a gentleman: when master of the situation he scorned to take advantage. He wasn't kept at the kennels, situated about a mile and a half from the house, but in a small "self-contained" tenement in the back-yard, and here he was at the beck and call of every one. The boys when at home from school, none of them much

longer at that time than the gun they carried, would take him off in the morning down the river after duck: the butler, having got well in front of his work, would take him off in the evening shooting rabbits: any one staying in the house for a week—we stayed long in that house—would be recognised by Oscar as on the strength of the establishment, and welcomed with effusion if he called on business. His rightful owner, the Squire, didn't always find him when he wanted him; but he never complained. Sooth to say, he was content to hear of his favourite's exploits from others; and hardly was any one out but he came home with something to tell. "De mortuis nil nisi bonum," but having ignored this excellent proverb already by alluding to his fits of temporary insanity, and his vagaries incident thereto, I may as well add that Oscar, had he lived in the present day, would not have got a prize for gentleness of disposition.

The 'Field,' in the article from which I have already quoted, says, "It must not be forgotten that, in addition to being used for general shooting purposes, retrievers are now in far greater demand than Scottish deer-hounds as assistants to the stalker after red-deer." Devoted as I am to retrievers, and prepared at all times to champion their cause—ready as I am, if any one abuses them, to exclaim with Mr Pickwick, "Come on, all four of ye,"—this, I admit, surprises me. I am very doubtful—wonderful in nose as some of them are—if they would equal the "tracker," a cross between the deer-hound and the collie, an animal that would take up without hesitation a scent twenty-four hours old and carry it for miles over the worst part of a Highland forest, composed simply of stuff like broken-up paving-stones, and fetch you, as I have seen one of them do, to a piece of bone not six inches long. The colour of a retriever, moreover, must be very much against him for this sort of work. You seldom or never see a coal-black object moving in the heart of a deer-forest: it would attract attention at once; and unless you clothe your dog in khaki, it would be visible to the watchful hinds a couple of miles off. I remember many years ago, when "spying" for deer in the forest of Kinlochewe, getting my eye on something black moving at a great distance. I instantly came on it as soon as I began to "look" the hill-face. "What can that be?" I said to the man with me, Duncan Fraser by name, who was engaged in filling his pipe. "That, sir," he replied without pausing in his occupation, or even taking the trouble to look up,—"That, sir, will be the herd at Dundonnell gaun back frae his brither's funeral. They're aye trashin' on wi' their funerals, and spilin' folks' sport: he micht weel ha'e gane roond by the loch-end, and be tamn'd tae him, whether his brither's deid or no'."

The paucity of good breakers, Mr Wheler contends, accounts

for the paucity of good retrievers. In some rather important trials lately, every dog, without one single exception, was found wanting. They were presumably thought much of by the men who entered them, but all failed when put to the test. No wonder a reliable animal is valued at its true worth!

I am pleased when I reflect that there is at any rate one man—not to be vainglorious, I am convinced there is a very large number—who thinks that ignorance and red tape are the predominating factors in canine affairs; and that there is a vast stable, something similar to one presently to be indicated, that requires a thorough cleansing, and a numerous body of useless and dishonest hangers-on in connection therewith who will require to be relegated to the "lines of communication" before efficiency and commonsense come to the front. Few laymen know anything whatever of the diseases of dogs. They accept without a murmur the belief their forebears accepted before them, notably with regard to rabies in the dog and hydrophobia in the man. A "mad dog" leaves his home—that's the first thing he is supposed to do—scours the country, biting every one he comes across, and dies "foaming at the mouth." This is a fable pure and simple. Dogs suffering from rabies do not foam at the mouth. Their inclination, moreover, is to lie still. They feel ill, and do not want to be interefered with. Leave them alone, and they'll leave you alone. Professor Dick was never afraid of being "attacked" by his patients—he scouted the idea. As for travelling from one end of a county to another, they have about as much inclination so to do as I should imagine the "Powerfuls" had to traverse "the Hard" at Portsmouth at the double, on the morning after their frugal repast at the Admiralty and their "cup of tea" at Lloyd's.

Hydrophobia in the human being Mr Long, according to the Board of Agriculture, has stamped out. It had been increasing "by leaps and bounds," *vide* a rather acrimonious discussion in the columns of the 'St James' Gazette,' unaccountably closed by the editor on the very lines Oom Paul desires the war to be closed, when the side inevitably destined to meet with its deserts was within measurable distance of annihilation. "Unbeliever," on whose side I unhesitatingly range myself, points out that such an expression as "increasing by leaps and bounds" implies that there was a very considerable number of cases, "shall we say twenty or thirty or forty?" He asks, "Where did this saltatory effort on the part of the terrible disease occur, where did the unfortunate people die, where are they buried?" If these kangaroo-like propensities were indulged in at the expense of her Majesty's subjects, it would be satisfactory to know more about them, but "Unbeliever's" gauntlet was never picked up:

his questions never were, and never can be, answered. Mr Long's admirers, "Unbeliever's" opponents, imported the great City hospital, "Bartholomew's," into the controversy. The cases that had occurred there would prove, so they said, the wisdom of Mr Long's legislation. During the time Mr Long has been in office there has been one death, and one only, in the institution. The victim was bitten in the ear in his own house. Would Mr Long's legislation have prevented this? A "very terrible" case occurred in Christ's Hospital, the old historical "Blue-Coat School." What are the facts here? I had them from Dr Aldersmith, the resident physician. The death occurred in 1882—many years before we heard of Mr Long. A woman died, a nurse in the hospital, a terrier, her own property, having died three weeks previously "foaming at the mouth." The woman denied that the dog had bitten her, the nurse that attended her corroborated her statement, not a scratch or bite could be found on her; but it was discovered that she had wiped the foam from the animal and blown her nose thereafter. Columbus we know discovered America: the chosen of Mid-Lothian in his last campaign discovered on the eve of the poll that he had an opponent—great discoveries both, but fairly eclipsed by this! But to leave the City and go farther afield. In the Middlesex Hospital — I should be afraid to say how many patients are annually treated there— the last case of "hydrophobia" occurred in the year 1866. A physician of European reputation, with whom I lately had an interview, told me he never wrote or spoke on hydrophobia. "I have seen, I believe, as many 'mad dogs' as any man in the profession," he said. "I have been called in on several occasions when 'dumb madness' broke out in fox-hound kennels, but I keep clear of the subject altogether. I don't know what to believe." "Do you believe in Pasteur?" I asked. "Pasteur," he replied, "I always had a most profound respect for; but whether his treatment kills or cures, I cannot decide, and I don't believe any one can."

Unfortunately, this gentleman, anxious no doubt for a quiet life, declines to allow his name to be mentioned.

In the autumn of last year a correspondent of the 'Times,' writing under a pseudonym ("Custos"), presumably for the same reason, states that there has never *within the memory of man* been a case of hydrophobia among the London police. That he is correct I can personally vouch for. *A perfect army — probably five or six thousand strong* forty years ago, gradually increasing in strength, and now numbering over sixteen thousand — has enjoyed absolute immunity from the disease, although hundreds of its members have at different times been bitten by stray dogs of every sort and description. A most extraordinary coinci-

dence, to say the least of it. Four or five men of the Metropolitan force—none from the City—have undergone the Pasteur treatment; but they survived that also. "Yes; but policemen are bitten through thick gloves," I have heard it urged. This explanation, though ingenious, gets us no further towards the elucidation of the mystery. Policemen don't wear gloves; and when they do—ever since the Royal visit to Dublin, Irish is universally spoken—they wear thin thread ones.

Suppose I were to call upon one of the many eminent physicians resident in the metropolis on the subject of diphtheria or typhoid, and were to mention "that very melancholy case, you know, that ended fatally," he would, I opine, be considerably puzzled, and ask me to put things a little more definitely. Say, on the other hand, that he took an interest in hydrophobia, no explanation whatever would be necessary—every case would be within his knowledge; every case he would be thoroughly conversant with — they could be numbered on the fingers of one hand. The dreadful case in Bartholomew's — the only case since the year 1886; the heartrending case of the nurse —that happened in 1882; the poor boy from the Basingstoke Canal—thirty years old, the case, not the boy: he was thirteen — and two or three others, would be marshalled behind the scenes, and marched across the stage in weary monotony,—"butchered to make a Roman holiday"—hashed up once more for the delectation of a credulous public. Say that all the stock cases as above are well authenticated.[1] What do they amount to? It is not an easy sum to work out, but one case per million in fifteen or twenty years would, I should think, be something like the result.

Unfortunately it is as often as not "a dog of the retriever type" that "takes its course" through the country "foaming at the mouth" and biting indiscriminately, and who falls a prey, as "Custos" says, to a "childish panic discreditable to the common-sense of Englishmen."

Dogs owned by ignorant people—I mean ignorant of everything connected with canine pathology—are not to be envied. They run about the same risks as foreigners in the Flowery Land; for, at any time, scripturally speaking, they may awake in the morning to find themselves dead dogs. Only last month I was talking to an officer in the Royal Scots of dogs and their diseases, of rabies, microbes, spinal cords, and autopsies, when he told me an instructive story connected

[1] I cannot for one moment doubt that two at least were typical cases of "hydrophobia." The late Sir William Savory, called in by Dr Aldersmith, certified as much in the Blue Coat School case: Mr Nunn, the celebrated surgeon of Stratford Place, himself attended the boy bitten on the Basingstoke Canal, and gave me the particulars.

with an Airdale terrier, his property. In January last the animal had a litter of puppies, all strong and healthy. The mother unfortunately caught a chill in the severe weather, and one by one her progeny sickened and died, till she was left, within two months of her confinement, childless. Not writing M.R.C.V.S. after my name, I am unable to tell with certainty the reason of this mortality; but I should imagine that in consequence of weakness the mother had been unable to give sufficient nourishment to her young ones, hence the untoward result. It looked at one time as if she herself was fated to join the majority; but as the weather improved her health followed suit, and at last the day arrived when she was taken out for what her owner intended to be a mild "constitutional." As ill-luck would have it, she got on the scent of a hare, and before she could be stopped was off like the wind, and coursed it for half a mile. Poor thing! though her keenness remained her strength had gone, and she returned thoroughly exhausted. Next day she did not seem much the worse for her escapade, and she was taken out again in a different direction, where there was little chance of her playing the *rôle* of a "jelly dog." Presently — to use her owner's words—"she bolted at full speed, without rhyme or reason. She's a very fast one, but I never knew she could go such a pace: ran for about two hundred yards, turned on her own axis, and came back at a record gallop. Before reaching me she fell over on her side and lay foaming at the mouth, her limbs still moving as if galloping. She then staggered on to her feet, howled and snapped wildly and viciously at nothing; looked at me, but evidently didn't recognise me, and bolted off again, if possible faster than before, finally tumbling over and lying motionless."

The disease from which this animal suffered, and which impelled her to act as she did,—again I speak with all due reserve, — was apparently epilepsy, superinduced by overexertion the day before. "More likely rabies; he won't tell us the result of the autopsy." Gently, gentlemen. I would with pleasure, but there was no autopsy. "Oh Sammy, Sammy, vy worn't there a alleybi?" said Mr Weller, senior, after the disastrous verdict in "Bardell *v.* Pickwick." Vy worn't there a autopsy? For the excellent reason that the bitch is, and has been for months, in robust health. The fits recurred at intervals for about a fortnight; but, with returning strength, they left her altogether. Had she bolted in the streets of London and tumbled over "foaming at the mouth," she would have been beaten to death without the hope of mercy; and the autopsy would doubtless have disclosed a typical case of rabies. A useful thing is the autopsy,

like the "alleybi": but it is occasionally—such is the assertion of the scoffer—held on the wrong dog: just as the "alleybi," with all due deference to Sammy's parent, is generally proved for the wrong day.

But to our sheep once more.

If proof were wanting of the accuracy of the 'Field' when speaking of show dogs, and of Mr Wheler when speaking of the great value of a reliable retriever, and the necessity of constantly watching him lest he gets into bad habits, we have only to study the history of Mr Shuter's "Darenth."[1] This extraordinary animal, transferred to canvas by Maud Earl, died in March last. He had gained upwards of £120 in prizes alone, and made in stud fees no less a sum than £1323: roughly speaking, during his active career of ten years—he died at the age of twelve—he was worth to his owner about £150 per annum. "For four years," we are told, "he was perfectly steady to heel, but from bad example or carelessness of late he required a slip." Apart from his value, his master was far too fond of him to think of parting with him, — luckily for the "grand old" dog, who, like the late member for Mid-Lothian, might from his self-willed and headstrong disposition have estranged all his friends in the autumn of his days.

[1] Mr L. Allen Shuter, Horton Hall, Horton Kirby, Kent.

PRISCILLA HOBBES.

I.

JOHN CROME, reading his paper in his comfortless lodgings before going to bed, heard his neighbour come up the noisy carpetless stairs and open her door. Then a moment or two afterwards there was a shriek, and the crash of something breakable, and hard slamming of the door. Wondering what this portended, and what he ought to do, he heard his name loudly called, and hastening out of his room and opening the opposite door, he stumbled up against the girl in the dark.

"Shut it! shut it!" she cried, "or he'll get out!"

"Get out!" cried Crome; "is it a man?"

"It's a cat! it's that cat that's always harming us! When I came up just now and lit a match, I saw the great horrid beast actually sitting on the top of the cage; I know it has killed my Billy! I threw the candlestick at it, and it came hissing and spitting down. And now I want to hunt it out and kill it! I shall never have any more peace as long as it lives!"

"You had better get a light first," said Crome. "I hope you were in time to save the bird." In her hurry to find a match Priscilla first fell headlong over a little table, and then nearly broke her skull against the mantelpiece.

"What shall we do with it?" she asked, eagerly turning to the man, after seeing that, though in a very rumpled-up condition, the little canary was still sitting safe on his perch.

"It's really rather difficult to know what to do. Suppose——"

"I'll tell you what I think we'd better do; we'll drop it quietly out of the window."

"That will most certainly kill the cat, Miss Hobbes."

"But I *want* to kill it; I'm not going to have that sneaking treacherous beast coming in every time I leave the room, and eating my Billy. Or would it be best just to knock it on the head first with the poker?"

Crome, understanding that he would be called on to act as executioner if this proposal was agreed to, remained silent.

"You could give it a good toss afterwards," she suggested, "and then it would go into the next court—and they wouldn't know who had done it."

"I'm afraid they would find out somehow, or guess at any rate: suppose we gave it a good beating, and then I took it downstairs, and pitched it into the street. I don't think it would ever come back again."

"Oh yes, it would, Mr Crome!" cried the girl; "oh, that would be no use at all! You don't know what a beast it is! If you had seen it glaring at me from the cage, and spitting! If *you* won't kill it, *I* will!"

"If it has to be killed, I suppose I must do it," he said reluctantly.

"Think how much harm it has done you too! how many nights it has kept you awake with its horrid squealing! Now let's poke it out! how will you catch it?"

"I don't know," said Crome; "I don't think I ever killed a cat in this way before; I've generally shot them." He looked about unwillingly for a weapon.

"Here's the poker," said Priscilla, handing it to him. "Now—it's under the bed. I'll shut my eyes, and hold my ears —one of them—and drive it out with the broom. And you must whack it as it comes. Now! are you ready?"

"Yes," said Crome, feebly putting himself into a position of attack, and greatly wishing he had gone to a Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association meeting he had seen advertised for that night.

"Boo-oo-whish-scat!" cried Priscilla, poking her broom into the cat's hiding-place. But no cat appeared. Then, taking both hands, she raised the end of the bed, and let it come down with a rush; and still nothing issued forth. She went down on all-fours to reconnoitre.

"He's not here," she said in a disappointed tone; "I was sure he went in here. Then he's under that chair in the corner." But the chair also was catless. "Oh dear!" exclaimed the girl, "where can he be?"

"I fear that he must have got out before you shut the door," said Crome, secretly rejoicing.

"Oh no! he couldn't do that; I was so quick; he must be behind that dress hanging there! yes—I saw it move! hit it as hard as you can!" Crome struck the garment, but did no harm to the beast in question, for it was not there. "I think it is a spirit cat!" exclaimed Priscilla in great vexation.

"We are like the man who sold the skin before he killed the bear," she added, laughing a little. "Well now, I shall never dare to leave my room again."

Crome, however, showed her how to hang the cage so that the tyrant of the back-yard could not—unless he was in very sooth more than an ordinary cat—get at it. Priscilla picked up the fragments of the candlestick, and a feather or two from her little friend's tail, and then she poked the dull mass of coal in the grate into a cheerful blaze.

"I'm going to have some cocoa," she said, putting a little white-lined pan on the fire; "sit down for a minute, and have some too, after your trouble." She gave the invitation with just that little spice of peremptory hospitality which her mother, or any farmer's wife in the dale where she used to live, would have used to a guest. Crome afterwards wondered what excuse a clever man would have been able to give on the spur of the moment, if he did not wish to accept the offer or offend the giver of it. He watched Priscilla stir in the powder, and in a minute or two got his cup.

"There!" she said, with a little air of triumph, "that's better than you make for yourself, I'm sure."

"Do you know, Miss Hobbes," said Crome, as he drank his cocoa, "that I'm rather glad on the whole that that creature did get away."

"I'm not," she said.

"I should have felt rather uncomfortable in killing it up here in cold blood."

"I shouldn't. My blood was hot enough when I saw it clinging on to the cage with its great yellow eyes glaring at me. But perhaps—on the whole—it is as well."

"I think so. And then it would have been rather a business disposing of it."

"We might have carried it a little way down the street," said Priscilla, "and left it near some other person's house."

"And that," replied Crome, rapidly forming the procession in his mind's eye, "would have been rather awkward too—if we had happened to meet the police."

How long these two poor innocents would have existed—so near to each other and yet so far apart—if their coming together had depended on their individual modesty or indifference, it is hard to say: perhaps they would never have come together. This little incident formed a kind of introduction, and after it they lived on less cold and formal terms with one another. They learnt something of each other's history. Priscilla indeed soon told the man pretty nearly all there was to tell about her simple affairs. She would chat away whenever she got an opportunity in very unreserved fashion about her life on the fell farm. But the opportunities depended on Crome, and they did not come very often.

II.

One Saturday morning Crome found himself a free man with a day at his own disposal. A public building was to be opened in the town, a great personage had arrived for the ceremony, and work was over—as far as work ever can be over in such a busy place—till Monday. He determined to devote the morning to writing some private business letters, and sat down to them soon after breakfast; but for some time his thoughts, do what he would to check them, kept wandering away unhappily to old times: he sat idly drawing on the blotting-paper, staring at the dismal outlook from the window, doing anything but what he had set himself to do. It was eleven o'clock, and he had made little headway with his work, when there was a knock at the door, and Priscilla in her hat and jacket stood on the threshold.

"I'm going to spend my holiday," she said, "out of this horrid crowded town,—in the country; I'm going primrose-hunting, and I thought—perhaps—you wouldn't be offended if I came and asked you if you would care to come too." She

spoke with a good deal of hesitation, as if she was not sure how her invitation would be received.

There flashed through Crome's mind in a moment the almost impropriety of his going a-holiday-making with this girl —his extreme disinclination to do such a thing; his satisfaction at having such a good and obvious excuse. "It is very kind of you," he said, "but I am afraid such a thing is quite impossible. I have"—he looked at the littered table —"a great many letters which I must write to-day."

"I'm sorry you can't come," said Priscilla; "there's a train before twelve; we should be on the moor by one. I know there will be lots of primroses out now in the sunny corners—it has been so warm and fine."

"I am afraid it is quite impossible," replied the man. His visitor still stood in the doorway; with her bright colour and happy eyes she looked like a buxom embodiment of spring herself. She still held to her point.

"It will be lovely on the fells to-day—away from all the crowd and bustle and horrid bands! *I* don't want to see the Prince and be crushed to death. Perhaps you can come after all."

"Really, Miss Hobbes," began Crome, "you see I've so much to do, and——"

"I think you had better come," said the girl, with something of coaxing in her voice. She spoke just after the fashion —he knew it—in which she would try to over-persuade some young fellow of her own rank to do something he ought not to do, and he was amused and half-pleased and yet half-irritated at the persistence of her pleading. But since she had stood there and spoken of the fresh country-side his task had become still more distasteful to him and difficult: he thought of the long dreary day before him, the solitary meals, the crowded streets in which he would meet no friendly face. And then, suddenly, he made up his mind to accept the offer.

"I will come, then," he said, shutting up the blotting-book determinedly, "and let these wait. It is good of you to ask me."

Priscilla showed by her face that she was pleased. "That's nice of you," she said heartily; "it's so much pleasanter going with some one than alone. Now I'll run off and get some things I want, and meet you at the station at twelve sharp."

So soon as she was gone Crome repented him of his weakness: it was not very wise or prudent of him to go wandering about the country with that girl, and would it even be a very pleasant thing to do? The robust charms of this fell-side maiden did not fascinate him, and he knew that there was no possibility of anything which could be called a flirtation arising between them. He was never for a moment unconscious of the difference in their social positions, or rather in their real positions, for socially they might now be called on a level. Whether the expedition was a desirable

one to make or not, he was in for it now. He made some change in his dress, and arrived at the station in good time, and was soon safely seated in a third-class carriage with his companion for the day. Priscilla was breathless and radiant: she explained that most of the shops in the town were shut, and she had found it difficult to get anything for their dinner; she looked with approval at Crome's grey shooting-suit, and felt glad that she had put on her best frock, and not her second best, as she had at first thought of doing. To her there seemed nothing unnatural or incongruous in their thus setting forth, and she looked forward with keen enjoyment, untouched by any feeling of embarrassment, to their little outing.

People were pouring into the town that day, very few seemed going out of it, and they had the carriage to themselves. In an hour it was smoking forty miles behind them, and they were far up amongst the stone-walled pastures, the debatable land which lies between the moor proper and the cultivated land below. "If we don't find so many primroses here," explained Priscilla, "they'll be sweeter and better ones, and it's so nice to be high up." They had their lunch, or, as she called it, their dinner, in the middle of a narrow winding gill which ran up from the low country right into the moor. The soil in this gill was a good red loam, and the naturally planted oaks grew well in it so long as they stood in the shelter, putting up straight clean stems towards the sun. But when they got big enough to look over the wind-swept fell they commenced a hard fight with the elements, and suffered in it, taking perhaps as long to grow an inch now as a foot lower down, and getting gnarled and lichen-stained and sorely cropped in the process, — not unfit emblems, Crome thought sadly, of a man who starts life in luxury and ease, and then suddenly finds himself struggling for bare life. Through the thick carpet of last year's crisp brown leaves the soft hooked stems of bracken were pushing up, and brave clumps of primroses nestled amongst the undergrowth of hazel, while delicate anemones and pale scentless violets fringed the higher part of the banks.

III.

Priscilla, with some pride, emptied her basket. There were two large mutton-pies in it, and two mince-pies, and two cheese-cakes, and two oranges. Crome would have been willing to exchange some of the abundant pastry for a very small modicum of whisky; but he had to quench his thirst with an orange and the water from the beck. The caterer devoured every crumb of her share: for her perfect digestion the toughest and the largest quantity of pastry had no terrors. Then the man lit a pipe and lay on his back, and wondered if he was dreaming

and would awake to find he was far away on a Scottish hill with a keeper at his side instead of a country girl. As he poked the papers in which the lunch had been wrapped into a hole, he thought of the hundreds of times he had done the same thing before, smoking, maybe, the very pipe he had in his mouth now, his only care or anxiety then being that the wind should be right for the beat he was on for the rest of the day, for either his setters or the deer.

"Do you see that clump of sycamores — far away over there," said Priscilla, interrupting his reverie, "though of course you can't tell they are sycamores from here. That's Hindfell, and if we were round yon shoulder we could see the house. I wonder if it will be mine some day! perhaps not! And what shall I do then?"

"I hope it will be yours," said Crome.

"If it isn't I shall have to earn my living in downright earnest," she continued; "and I'm sure I don't know what I'm fit for. I'm not clever enough to be a schoolmistress or a telegraph-girl, as so many are now, and of course I don't know enough to be a governess. . . . A neighbour of ours not long since went up to London to be a nurse at a hospital, but she had a wretched time of it. They made her scrub floors, and wash up things, and she never saw any of the patients hardly, and after a year they said she wasn't strong enough, and sent her away. I think she paid them money, too. She was a sight to see when she came back,—her clothes just hanging on her,—and she as big and strong as me when she went to them. What could I do?" she asked disconsolately, after a long pause.

"I'm afraid it's very difficult for any one to find things to do."

"The only thing I really could be properly is a dairymaid, and of course that would be a sad come down. I *do* know about that. I think I could take charge of a large dairy; and that's the only thing in the whole wide world I'm fit for!" Priscilla made this announcement in a most melancholy voice. "I know my uncle sometimes means to leave me the farm, and sometimes he doesn't. One can never be sure *what* he means. And he might die any day."

"Well," said Crome, after another long pause, "let us hope he will leave it to you, and then you will be all right. I should think he will." Coming down from the moor they passed an old mill, and Priscilla told a little story about it.

"Long ago," she said, "oh! perhaps nearly a hundred years ago now, there were a lot of men working in the quarry there, and one Saturday afternoon—just as it might be to-day—the man in charge was coming along—just where we are now—to pay them. He had a bag of money with him. I used to think," said the girl laughing, "that he had it in a sack on his back, and was staggering along just as one does coming from the granary, but I suppose it

was in his pocket. That plantin' was thick then, the trees were young, and a bad scoundrel hid himself in the middle of it with a pistol. He waited till the poor clerk was just opposite, and then shot him, like a coward that he was, in the back, and got the money. The murderer was a dry-stone-dyke builder, and I'll show you farther on a queer-shaped stone he set in the wall on the morning of that very day. Father said he must have had two or three men to help him, it is so very big."

They stopped opposite the great boulder, and Crome thought of that Saturday long ago, and the slow approach of the victim, and the anxious watch of the executioner.

"A hundred years ago," he said. "Well, it's a quiet peaceful place now, isn't it? I suppose almost every single person who was alive when that shot was fired is dead now—good and bad. And there that stone will lie for perhaps many centuries more, with hardly a line on it altered, till *we* are all dead and forgotten. And the story will go on."

"Yes!" cried Priscilla eagerly, much struck by this sage bit of philosophy; "that's just what I feel myself!"

Their train did not leave till nearly five, and it was yet hardly four; how was the intervening time to be filled up?

"There is a little inn down by the wood there," the girl said. "Should we go to it and get some tea, instead of waiting about the station? It is a tidy little place." The evening was cold now, and threatening rain.

"Should you like some tea?" asked Crome. "Well, let us go."

IV.

The "End of the World" was a whinstone-built house, standing almost on the road, with a large straggling fir wood in front of it and a moory common behind. If report did not lie, it used to be a place of meeting for poachers, and it was associated in the mind of the superintendent of police in the district with more serious crimes. But those days had passed; the place had lately changed hands, the thatched roof had given way to a slated one, the garden was fenced in, and the sign—a globe falling over a precipice—had been repainted. You might search the loft and barn through and through now, and find neither partridge-net nor cleek nor gun.

They went into the stuffy parlour: there was an oilskin-covered table in the middle, and some slippery chairs round it; a bleared looking-glass, and a badly stuffed fallow-deer's head, and a fox-hunt painted by a local artist, ornamented the walls. The fox depicted here was on so large a scale, and in every way so truly formidable a beast, that you could understand the evident reluctance of the queerly shaped hounds to attack him. After a long wait a woman appeared.

"What'll you be wanting?" she asked shortly, immediately exclaiming, "Why — bless my soul, if it isn't Priscilla Hobbes! Why, Priscilla! who'd ever hev thowt o' coming across you to-neet! Well, Ah *is* glad, dear, dear! Measter!" she cried in an authoritative voice, "here a minute — you're wanted!"

"Why, Mrs Buck!" said the girl, "I'm just as surprised to see you! I never knew you'd left the Clickum!"

"Well, the Clickum left us, you see—there was fairly nowt doin' there at last, since they altered t' rwoad, so Ah sez to oor Measter, 'Jacob,' sez Ah, 'let's away oot o' this afwore we lose *all* we hev!' And then auld Timmery died, and his fwolk didn't know what to do, so we just got the licence transferred, and came in at Martinmas. If it isn't a gold-mine it's a better place for bidin' in than *yon*. But come in, come in oot o' this cold. Jacob!" she cried, as her huge spouse came peering into the dimly lit room, "here's Priscilla Hobbes come to see us, and her young man."

"You're welcome! you're welcome!" said the worser half of the establishment, in a hoarse voice.

"There's been a weddin' here to-day," explained Mrs Buck. "You mind o' Pamela Gregorwon? Well, Pamela's been weddit this mworning to young Tyson up at Moorhouse Broad Tops, and they're off to Leeds for their honeymoon. And we've two or three lasses and a lad or two in wid us noo, and Ah believe they'll be dancing befwore they break up. You mun stop and see."

"We can't do that," said Priscilla; and then as he followed the two upstairs Crome heard a whispered conversation, no doubt about himself.

A dozen or more people were sitting round a well-covered tea-table in a large room, the gentler sex predominating. Some of them knew Priscilla and heartily welcomed her, and looked with no little curiosity at the tall well-dressed man who was her escort. Crome, two or three years ago, when he held an assured position in the world, would have thought nothing of Mrs Buck's mistake, would indeed have been the first to laugh at it. Accustomed to electioneering, to canvassing in all its branches, to the open-hearted hospitality of Cumberland farm-houses, it was no very new thing for him to find himself one of such a gathering as was here, and in those happier days no feeling of awkwardness would have touched him: he would have chatted away quite comfortably about the wedding with his neighbours, and with his host about the weather and his sheep. But now he took the seat willingly allotted to him between two stalwart damsels with silent misery in his heart. Whatever the girl might think about it, it was hateful to him to be introduced in such a fashion, and from the bottom of his heart he cursed the indecision which was responsible for his sufferings.

The table was loaded with good things — cold ham, beef, and pie, great piles of girdle-

cakes and buttered toast, cheese, marmalade and preserves. Some of the party were drinking tea, some beer. One young man with a long black moustache and black whiskers, cut off in a straight line between the upper part of his ear and his mouth, drank rum. This was the acknowledged leader of the revels, the beau of the feast. He had acted as best man in the morning, and was now the active moving spirit and wit of the room. Before he left the house Crome hated this man as he thought he had never hated one of his fellow-creatures before. It was not that the man was intentionally rude; he only did what he would willingly have been done by under similar circumstances. If he had come into the middle of a festive gathering such as this, with a pretty girl in his charge, he would have thought it not only reasonable but right and proper that allusion should be made to the fact; he had not heard Mrs Buck's introduction, but nothing of that kind was necessary; his experienced eye took in the situation at once: here was a young fellow, a stranger, in company with an old friend of his; he must be made to feel at home, to be one of themselves, and learn the good feeling and friendship which existed in the dale society.

He insisted on Crome and Miss Hobbes not being separated for a moment; he called on the young ladies who sat on either side of the *ci-devant* squire to make room for her, assuring them at the same time of his sympathy with them for being so speedily torn away from such a desirable neighbour. When the giggling girls, entering fully into the fun of the thing, continued to sit still, the groomsman insisted on his suggestion being carried out, and assured Crome that "his young lady" would not thank him afterwards for his politeness unless he insisted too. And it was not till the landlady saw that things were going too far that this irrepressible person was content to sit down, fully satisfied that he had maintained his character for ready and sparkling humour. When Priscilla saw Crome's face grow stern instead of merely red, she gave Mrs Buck a kick under the table, and the good lady took the hint.

"Well, now, that's enough of your jokin', Aaron. Dear me! who meade *you* chairman to-neet, Ah wonder? Ah doubt the rum's been ower strang for you. Now, Bessy, and you, Annabel, just bide where you are, and look after the gentleman; he's likely to starve for all the care *you're* takin' of him. Him and Priscilla's seen plenty o' each other to-day, I daresay, and are glad to sit separate a bit." Crome was aghast: was there never to be an end to these innuendos? Yet he felt how perfectly natural it was that the worthy people should jump to their conclusions; and did he not deserve every bit of the misery he was undergoing for his stupid folly? Was it wonderful that every one in the room believed that he was courting Miss Hobbes? He looked at his watch oftener

perhaps than good breeding would have allowed: never did an hour pass so slowly, and it was an indescribable relief to him when at last they got away.

To Priscilla the day had been one of almost perfect happiness. But when she said Good night to her companion she added, with a little hesitation, "You didn't think it forward of me, Mr Crome, to ask you to go with me to-day, did you?"

"Of course not," he replied; "how could it have been? It was very kind of you to think of me."

But it was something of a relief to Crome that a week or so after this outing a message—not unexpected altogether—arrived from old Mr Booth asking his niece to go back to her old home and look after it for him. So she went: willing or unwilling, such a message had to be obeyed. Crome missed her just as he would have missed the pleasant face of any kindly neighbour—missed her the more because he had so few neighbours, and none perhaps who could be called kindly. Till within the last two or three years he had been a comparatively rich man, living in good society; and when absolute ruin, through no fault of his own, turned him for the time into a surveyor's office, he found it almost impossible to make friends with the people with whom only he was brought in contact,—kind people they were many of them, and good people, but not of his order.

V.

The surveyors in whose office Crome was a subordinate were engaged in the preliminary working out of a great water scheme for the supply of a large town, and with this in view had been for some time examining an extensive fell district, in the middle of which was Hindfell, the farm owned by Priscilla's uncle; and not very long after her departure it became his duty to go down there and get some particulars which were wanted in the office. "Mr Booth knows you are coming," said the partner who gave the instructions, "so will you call at the house after you have done what you can in this little matter and speak a pleasant word to the old gentleman? We hear he is a rather difficult person to deal with, and we must try and keep him in a good humour. And I should like to know what he thinks of the proposed survey of the district. Make it clear to him that he is only one of very many who will have their premises invaded." Crome went somewhat unwillingly to his work. He thought he hardly wanted to see Miss Hobbes again so soon, but he had of course no option in the matter.

About four o'clock he had finished his work, and having some time to spare before he was due down at the farm, he walked up to the top of a long slope which stretched

above him to see what sort of a country lay on its other side. He lit a pipe, and sat down on a great stone, which had perhaps lain there, old and weather-beaten, in the days when cave hyenas rambled over the fells and mammoths pastured in the plain below.

There are not many places in the kingdom where such a view as that on which he looked then is to be seen. The fir and heather in the south, in Surrey or Devon, often remind a man of the land which is more especially their home; but there was nothing Highland or South Country in the face of nature here. There were no fir-trees, no wood indeed of any kind, and very little heather; hills, but none sharp or jagged, all rounded and green to the top. The enclosures were very large, and they were invariably divided from each other by very high cockly-built stone walls. There was hardly any arable land to be seen, just small patches round the farm-steadings away down in the low country. The land was chiefly rushy pasture, and though below the warm early sun had forced some green out of the meadows, up here everything was as yet grey and yellow. The air, though sharp, had something mellow in it; this fell air bears a high character in the opinion of those who pay attention to such things, and that which hangs or blows over this particular place possesses the power of discolouring the little bits of chemically prepared paper which are delivered over to it sooner we believe than any other in the kingdom. It was a still afternoon, the bleat of a sheep came down on what faint breeze there was for nearly a mile, and you would have to walk far farther than you expected across the soft coarse turf before you got to where the peewits were calling, and wheeling about in their strange weary-looking flight. Far away two masses of smoke rose up into the sky — one from a seaport town, and the other from a large mining village; but both were at a distance which softened and hid any ugly details. From where the watcher sat a man could travel right away into Yorkshire almost without crossing a public road.

Soon after arriving at his outlook Crome's eye had been caught by a smoke on the edge of the fell some half a mile away—it would be dense for a little, and then grow fainter, and soon die out altogether, to appear again a few minutes later in a different place. He watched it lazily till the half hour he had given himself was up, and then knocked the ashes out of his pipe and rose to go. He had scarcely started when the smoke again showed up, this time in a longer line; the wind was rising a little, and he could see the long flames now rapidly running over the dry grass, and getting nearer and nearer to a large patch of heather, the only dark place visible on the hillside. "That will go now," thought the man. He climbed on to the top of the wall and tried to make out how far the fire was from the

heather, and whether he had time to watch the destruction which was rapidly approaching it. As he stood precariously balancing himself, he fancied he heard a cry. As far as he could judge, there was only one person looking after the blaze, and if so there seemed a likelihood of more ground being burnt than had been bargained for. He went on a little farther, and was able to see plainly that the muir-burner was alone and in difficulties, and then he ran quickly down the slope to give his help.

VI.

Long before Crome reached the fiercely burning grass he made out that the fire-raiser was a woman, and he was hardly surprised to find that it was a woman he knew.

"Hulloa! Miss Hobbes," he cried, "you have got into trouble! what a fire! Is there no one to help you?"

Priscilla had been having a desperate fight with the most dangerous of the elements. Little did she think when, for old associations' sake, she started a small blaze in a safe corner that she was committing herself to such a labour as this. Her face was scarlet with heat and exertion, her hat was hanging on the back of her head, and her hair was anyhow: the little switch with which at first she had been able to control matters soon became worn and useless, and long before the man joined her she had slipped off her thick petticoat, and was now following up the most exposed side of the long sheet of fire, vainly trying to smother it. Though she was much more surprised at Crome's appearance than he was at hers, she had no breath to greet him with. "Help me!" she panted, and on she went, bringing her strange weapon down with mighty whacks on the burning grass; sometimes driven back by the fierce far-leaping flames and dense suffocating smoke, but always returning bravely again to renew the attack.

The proper weapon for dealing with a hill-fire, whether it be of heather or grass, is a good birch besom with a six- or eight-foot handle, and if the pinch comes on you and you are without such an instrument, you must do as Priscilla did, doff one or other garment and use it: there is no other way. Whatever it is, of the male or female kind, it is a poor substitute for the besom, and is likely to come out of the fray very much the worse for the treatment it gets there. So it was with a good deal of unwillingness that Crome pulled off his jacket and set himself to work. A muir-burning was no new experience to him, and he loved the strong aromatic smell, and the crackling flames, and the look of the sun shining through the smoke like a great crimson ball. But then he had always been used to work at it with a dozen strapping men behind him.

For ten minutes or more the

two wrought together almost in silence. Sometimes, when the breeze strengthened a little, the flame ran over the dead white grass as if it had been steeped in paraffin, and then they despaired. When the breeze dropped, the fire slackened, and they went at it with renewed vigour. The black patch lengthened behind them, its fiery head crept like some great dragon nearer and nearer to the heather, thirsting to consume it. But at last the workers got the upper hand; broke into its flames, got in at the very heart itself, and stamped it fairly out: the danger was over.

Priscilla threw herself exhausted on the grass, her face more scarlet than ever, her whole body shaking. Crome was in little better plight. They lay there without speaking for a minute or two. When she had to some extent recovered her breath the girl sat up, clasped her knees, and looked mournfully at the blackened garment beside her. "It was a new one!" she gasped, and Crome examined *his* weapon. A few minutes before it had been a well-cut, well-fitting Harris-tweed jacket; now a tramp would look askance at it if he came across it at the roadside.

"What will Uncle Zach say?" asked Miss Hobbes. Crome felt unable to suggest anything: he heartily wished that his business had not taken him in this particular direction on this particular afternoon.

"It wouldn't have done very much harm if we had let it burn," he said; "it was hardly worth such a fight to save it."

"The sheep always come here in snow-time," explained Priscilla. "I don't know what he would have said if it had all been burnt. He'll be very angry as it is." She looked at her companion with melancholy black eyes; but Crome, lamenting his coat, cared nothing for Mr Booth's feelings.

"I think I had better go down to the house and tell him," said the girl. "I'm very much obliged to you; it would all have been burnt if you hadn't come when you did." Then Crome explained that he also was due at the farm that afternoon.

"I'm glad of that!" said she heartily; "but I'm afraid he'll be very disagreeable: he's very cross about the water people coming on his land. He says he'll—— Oh, here he is!" exclaimed the girl; "oh dear! here's Uncle Zach coming along, and I know he'll be *very* angry." Then Crome was aware of a figure slowly climbing over the fence at the bottom of the big pasture-field in which they were.

In the days of his youth Mr Zachariah Booth had stood nearly six feet five in his stockings, and even now, with the burden of many years on his shoulders, he had not lost much of his height. He had been a mighty wrestler, the champion of a wide district, the terror of most of those who encountered him, or, in the phraseology of the ring, "lay down" to him without encountering him. He could

lift a table—so country folk said, without specifying what sort of a table they meant—in his teeth; he could throw a twelve-stone man over his shoulder, and sometimes did it, never caring how much the man suffered in the operation. Now the grey homespun clothes hung loosely on the enormous frame, and as Crome looked at him he was somehow reminded of the giants whose portraits are to be seen in fairy-tale books, or in some editions of the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' His huge hands, thickly covered with blue veins, seemed strong enough to belong to that mighty man depicted by Cruikshank who could squeeze water out of a stone. He had pointed brass-bound clogs on his feet, and a worn fur cap on his head. Below the cap brown eyes peered, thatched with immense shaggy grey eyebrows. His face was clean shaved, or at any rate the strong stubble which covered the lined lip and chin showed that it was so shaved on Sunday. This son of Anak came stiffly across the field towards the two, and when he got within fifty yards of them he stopped, and, leaning on his stick, waited their approach.

"Oh, Uncle Zach!" cried Priscilla, when still far away, and with a voice in which there was certainly something of apprehension—"I lit a little bit of grass in the three-neuked field, and it got away from me and burnt on to the heather. But we saved the big bit."

"Ey, ey," grunted the giant, still stiffly planted, and looking from one to the other. "Mebbe thoo thowt t' three-neuked field was thy own."

"No, Uncle Zach," said Priscilla. "I'm very sorry; but it will give a grand bite for the stirks later on."

"Sartinly thoo mun hev thowt sae. An' whoa's this lad wi' thee?"

"I happened to be not far off at the time," said Crome, seeing his companion rather at a loss what to say. "I have been here part of the day looking over the place from Messrs Boyd's office."

"An' thoo was to hev bin here at four," said Mr Booth, dragging a watch which bore due proportion to himself out of his breeches pocket; "an' noo it's better nor five. Ah'll gie thee a bit o' my mind, young man. When thoo hes to wark, *wark*, and when thoo gaes courtin', see to thy lass; but niver mix the two thegither, or thoo'll niver find breed for thysell—let aleane annuder."

Priscilla flushed as red as a poppy, and Crome found some difficulty in making a civil reply. "It was by accident we met," he said; "I am glad I was some little use. And I don't think there is much harm done."

"Nŭt at all," replied the giant; "it'll be gey good for the stirks at t' back end. An' what does *thoo* know aboot stirks, or owt else—except mebbe a young lass?"

It was only the remembrances of the instructions he had had in the office which prevented Crome from making a sharp

retort. As civilly as he could he said a few words to the farmer about the proposed survey, and then bade good night to the two, raising his cap to the girl as he walked off. Priscilla came close up to her uncle. "He's spoilt his coat helping me," she whispered eagerly, "and he's a gentleman; it's a shame to treat him like that." So before Crome had gone a hundred yards, the old man stopped him.

"Hey, measter," he cried in a voice that was more like a bellow than a roar, "Ah meant nowt bit daffin'; stop till Ah cum to thee! Thoo'd best cum to t' hoose, and Ah'll gie thee a glass o' milk."

"I have a train to catch at six," answered Crome.

"Train! thoo'll git neä train noo till efter nine! Next un 'ull be oot o' t' station in ten minutes."

"No train till nine!"

"Neä. Thoo'd best cum to t' hoose to clean thysell, and than thoo can ga doon to t' public-hoose for thy supper." Crome stood uncertain, looking at his blackened arms, till they joined him. "Well," asked the farmer, "ist thoo cumin', or isn't thoo?"

"I'll come in and wash my hands," he said, and they went on together.

The house stood up bare and gaunt before them, like its master. It was built of grey whinstone, and the ivy which in older days had been allowed to creep here and there over its walls had all been pulled down by its present owner. You cannot often watch a farmyard for many minutes without seeing some signs of life about it, or at any rate without hearing some sounds which show that life exists. But this evening there was no movement about the old place. Mr Booth had got most of the land laid down to grass, and work being here well forward, had sent his men and horses over to a led-farm he had some miles away. He kept no dairy stock at Hindfell; the byres were empty, and store bullocks wandered about the meadows which were not intended for the scythe. And so there was no chatter or laughter about the place, "When Tom came home from labour, or Ciss from milking rose," as old Bishop Corbet sang long ago; no cries to cattle, or neighing of horses, or barking of dogs. There was no living creature to be seen or heard outside.

An untidy bare-armed girl met them in the kitchen: as far as Crome saw, she was the only servant in the great rambling house. "Thoo'll find watter in t' sink," said Mr Booth, and that was indeed all there was there, till the girl, probably at Priscilla's instigation, brought him a towel and a bit of soap. While he was "cleaning himself" a conversation between the uncle and niece was carried on in the adjoining kitchen, in so low a voice on her part that he heard nothing, and in such sonorous speech on his that he could not help hearing all.

"Stop to supper! thoo'll be wantin' him to bide a' neet next! an' where div ye think supper for three fwolk is to cum fra?" Then in a still louder

roar, "Thoo'll git a rasher, and fĭnd an egg or two! an' wha's to pay for owder rasher or eggs? tell me that, ma lass! *Thoo'll* pay for 't? thoo mun hev mair brass than Ah ken o' then, if thoo can gah and fĭnd rashers for a' the tramps thoo meets!" Some curiosity, and some idea he would act in some sense as a shield to the girl, determined Crome to stay. "After all," he thought, "this old farmer is hardly human, and it doesn't matter much what he says, and it is perhaps better for me to take the brunt of his wrath from the girl."

The evening was chilly, but only a very small heap of coal was alight in a corner of the immense kitchen fireplace, which looked as if it had been little altered since the year 1533, when, as the long shiny lintel-stone above showed, "THIS HOUS WAS BVILLED BY F.H. AND M.R." The settle on one side of the fireplace, the table, the shelves and backing to them, the wainscot, and the rafters, were all oak, roughly fashioned at first, but now smoothed more or less by age and wear. But the two first bits of furniture alone bore their original colour—all the rest had been ruthlessly white-washed. The floor was laid with worn uneven flags, and the only decent bit of furniture in the room was a tall clock in a corner by the dresser, at the top of which was a picture of a shepherd coming home with his flock at night.

After tea the old giant thawed a little, and became, if not genial, less morose. He kicked off his clogs, though he still kept on his cap; he pulled his chair closer up to the fire, and invited his guest to take his place on the settle, and he produced from a cupboard a half-bottle of rum. "It's nŭt the varra best," he said, helping himself to a small glassful and passing the bottle on, "bit I gat it varra cheap. There was a man doin' summat to the top o' t' puncheon ya neet—mebbe summat he'd hev better let aleane—an' he couped in. Fwolk fŭnd a pair o' legs stickin' oot o' t' puncheon whan they cam' in t' mwornin', bit t' chap below was varra laal use for owt bit buryin'. Ah gat—mebbe twenty gallon o' t' rum, an' Ah can't say Ah nwotish owt wrang wid it. Though happen udder fwolk might." The last words were given as an extra warning, in case the grim story had not its desired effect. The old man swallowed the rum with increased gusto when he noticed his guest let his alone; he rolled the fiery liquid about in his cheek, and slowly grated his teeth as it were in approval over it. He grew more communicative as the drink warmed him, and dilated on the hardships and wrongs of farmers, especially of those who happened to farm their own land.

"An' sae thoo's efter t' lass?" he said suddenly, after they had sat in silence for a little while. Priscilla had left the room.

"Nothing of the kind!" answered Crome angrily. "I wish you'd get that idea out of your head! I told you how we happened to meet."

"Ey, ey, bit thoo didn't tell me thoo an' she lived in t' seame hoose in t' town—in t'

seame room for what Ah ken. She tellt me that hersell."

"There's no secret about it," said Crome, checking a very angry reply. "It was by accident too that we had rooms in the same house. And now I must go."

"Ey, ey," said Mr Booth, "well, Ah'se nowt to do wid her; she's nowt to me: fwolk thinks she'll mebbe git farm when Ah'se deid; it ull happen be a gey lang time afwore Ah *is* deid; any man as tak's her mun tak' her in her shift. Wills is queer things, and sae's land, and sae's munny, and neabody kens hoo they may gah — and hoo they mayna gah. Nut that Ah've owder land *or* munny to will away; land's mwortgaged, an' munny —munny's——" He found it difficult to say on the spur of the moment what had become of his capital, and he took another mouthful of rum, and looked wrathfully at his companion.

"Good night then," said Crome again. "And good night, Miss Hobbes," he said to Priscilla, who had just come into the room, "I must be off."

"Nea—thoo mun bide now. Thoo'll git nea train to-neet."

"There's one at ten minutes to nine," exclaimed Crome quickly. "You said so yourself."

"Ten minutes afwore eight Ah *sud* hev said. Bit it maks laal odds: t' lasses 'ull mak up a bed for thee."

"Mr Booth," said Crome, sternly, "you had no right to make me lose my train. And now I will go on to the nearest village and sleep there."

"Varra weel," replied the old man, indifferently, "please thysell; thoo's been at 'Warld's End' afwore. Ah thowt Ah'd mebbe hev gitten thee to sign thy neame to a bit paper Ah hev ready, — to witness my neame like."

"I'm afraid you must get some one else to do that," said the indignant Crome. "I must be off at once."

"Thoo mun please thysell, then. It was my will Ah wanted to git shot on."

"I can't help that," said Crome.

"An' it 'ull happen mak' sum odds to t' lass here, whedder it's signed or nut."

Crome looked at Priscilla, who started up from the settle at the mention of her name.

"I don't think I'm a proper person to witness your will," said the young man. He took up his hat and stick. Priscilla came forward a little: she held herself so that her uncle could not see her face; but he saw it, and pitied her from the bottom of his heart. "Won't you do it?" she whispered imploringly.

Once more Crome hesitated. After all, he had better witness the will. If Miss Hobbes was to lose anything by its not being signed at once—such a thing was unlikely, but not impossible—he would be to blame for it. "Very well," he said, "I'll witness it. But please get it at once."

"Sit thee doon and Ah'll nut keep thee lang," said old Mr Booth. "Mebbe — sum day— thoo'll be glad thoo's done it. Ah'll nut be lang in finding it," and he slowly left the room and climbed the creaking staircase.

The two young people stood side by side by the fire for five minutes without speaking, and then Crome became impatient. "I wish he would come!" he said. "I cannot wait."

For a little longer Priscilla remained silent, and then she burst out—

"Oh, Mr Crome! please — please — be patient! If you anger him now maybe he'll not sign it, and then I'll lose everything!"

"But," said Crome, "how do you know that you will gain anything by this will? It may do you harm, not good."

"Oh no—no; he's often told me he'd a will made out leaving the farm to the hospital, and another leaving it and money too to me. And this will be for me. He'll not be long. Oh! please wait — just a little while!"

"Of course I will wait," said the man kindly, "and don't be distressed. You see I've really nothing particular to do to-night, and I'll wait an hour if it's necessary."

So again they stood by the fire, and Crome surveyed in the flickering light his surroundings in the gloomy room: the worm-eaten fiddle-back chairs, which had probably supported many generations of the family Hobbes; the black-framed funeral notices on the wall; the blue-coated shepherd on the clock, who never got any nearer to his home.

After a long wait they heard the staircase begin to creak and groan again, and presently Mr Booth reappeared.

"T' will slippit at back o' t' kist," he explained, "an' Ah'll need t' staff to poke it oot. Bit Ah'll sune do that—when Ah gits ma breathin' agean."

He was panting with his exertions. Crome looked hopelessly at Priscilla: it was easy to read the girl's face — even her tightly twisted hands.

Mr Booth poured himself out another small allowance of rum. "Cum," he said, "thoo'd best bide the neet." And once again, that day, Crome hesitated, and then gave way. "What else," he thought helplessly, "can I do? If I go I may do great harm to that poor girl. And what real reason is there for my going? If I had only stood firm this morning!" When this was at last settled, Priscilla called the servant, and went away to make arrangements about the room, and Crome had to sit down on his hard chair, and watch his host, and listen to his strange talk. Old Zachariah was, for him, somewhat garrulous that night—perhaps it was the unusual fact of a listener, albeit an unwilling one, being present; perhaps the strong rum had some effect. At any rate, instead of sitting for the most part in glum silence as he had done before, the farmer considerably thawed, and after a while Crome, in spite of himself, was first interested and then to a certain extent fascinated by what he heard: strangely told bits of wild stories about ancient deeds, for the most part evil ones, connected with the district; of robberies and still greater crimes; of sheep-stealing, when to steal a sheep was death; of foul courts where

prisoners were tried, and gibbets on which they swung later—perhaps for years. After a time the old man went on with one reminiscence after another, and paid scant attention to his companion. "That minds me," —and he was off into another maze of ill-doing, what he said gaining something in the telling by the broad accent and strong old harsh voice.

So for an hour or more Crome listened more attentively than he could have thought possible. Then about ten the farmer suddenly stood up. "Noo for t' will," he exclaimed, and from one of his great pockets he produced a long envelope.

"Why, I thought it was upstairs!" Crome exclaimed before he could stop himself.

"Well, well, Ah sed sa, na doot, bit it was to git thee to bide. Ah likes thee fëace; Ah thowt thoo'd like to help t' lass. An' she'll be better for ma nëame at boddom o' this."

He took two folded papers out of the envelope, and opened one, putting on an immense horn-rimmed pair of spectacles to read it. "This un," he said, holding it towards Crome, "is t' paper as leaves a' t' brass an' land Ah hev to t' horspital in t' town. Ah pit ma nëame to it a year bye." As he finished speaking he threw it into the fire. "This un," he went on, looking at the other, "leaves land and hoaf o' t' brass to t' lass. An' Ah'll write ma nëame to *it*." He took it to the great table, and Crome stood behind him, and in the flickering light watched him shakingly write his name all crosswise and sprawling on the blue paper. When the signature was witnessed, Mr Booth, leaving the document lying there, once again helped himself to the rum.

"Thoo's done t' lass a good turn," he said again, "an' thoo may do thysell one too, if thoo likes. She'll hev thee, I'se warrant! Cush! Ah knows thoo's a gentle-folk," noticing Crome's swift-coming annoyance, "bit she's a fine lass. An'," pointing to the paper, "there's mair nor sebben thoosand pund here!"

This delicate suggestion was made just before Priscilla's return to the kitchen, and shortly afterwards the old farmer somewhat summarily dismissed his guest. "Ah'll bide a bit, and tak' a smeuk yit," he said; "but if thoo's for na mair rum mebbe thoo'd like to see thy bed."

Priscilla showed him to his room. "Did you do it?" she asked breathless, directly the door was shut behind them.

"I signed the will, Miss Hobbes," said Crome, "so it's all right. And now mind you keep on good terms with your uncle: I don't suppose he'll alter it if you do that."

It was a long time before Crome got to sleep: the big bedroom was both stuffy and cold, and the bed-clothes were as heavy as if they had been backed with sand. He listened for a long time to the pattering of a rat in the wainscot, and the occasional bay of a dog outside, but at last he dropped off to sleep.

He awoke with a great start; again he heard the baying of a dog, but now surely inside the house and not out. He lay listening, and it came again, the strange unhappy cry made by a lost dog. It came again, and then there was a gentle tap at his door, and it was half opened.

"Mr Crome! are you awake? do you hear the dog? what can be the matter?"

"Isn't it your uncle's dog, shut up somewhere?" suggested the man.

"Yes, it's 'Help.' But he was in the kitchen; why should he howl like that! it frightens me! will you come and see?"

Cursing with all his might and main the fates which had of late forced him to do so many things he did not wish to do, Crome partially dressed, and joined Priscilla, who was waiting in the passage. It was just three o'clock. The girl stood there with bare feet and only a big cloak over her night-dress, and he could see by her face, now deeply flushed and now quite white, that she was very much alarmed. He took her candle, and led the way softly down the passage and the creaking staircase into the kitchen.

The fire was still burning, the candle had long since spluttered out. Mr Booth sat at the head of his big table in the middle of the room; the fur cap was on his head, which rested on the table between his arms. The collie "Help" had also climbed up, and lay there with his nose stretched out flat and a frightened look in his eyes. The moon shone over the top of the great shutter, which hid the lower half of the window, full upon the man.

And no more for lightness could the moon give light unto him: for old Mr Booth there was to be no more walking about the farm in his pointed clogs; no more rating of farm servants, no more trafficking in the market, no more going of journeys—saving one.

The man and the woman stared at each other for a time without speaking. That which is the most regular and certain of all the certainties of the world seemed to them, then, impossible. Crome said what commonplaces of condolence he could think of—and was almost choked in the saying of them. After a while Priscilla took up the open will and, leaning on the table, began to read it. Suddenly she gave a startled cry, and he, coming to her side, read also. Just above the two signatures on which the ink had so lately dried he read this: "I revoke all former wills and testaments, and I bequeath all my property, real and personal, to the County Infirmary at Carlisle."

With a scream of indignation Priscilla snatched the paper from the table and, tearing it in two, crammed it into the fire. Her cloak fell off her shoulders, and, as she stood there, Crome, staring at her, could think of nothing—of nothing at such a time—save how in the old fairy tale a woman prayed that she might have a daughter as red as blood, as white as snow, and as black as ebony.

GILFRID W. HARTLEY.

THE WARDEN OF THE MARCH.[1]

WE are so accustomed to rely on the courage, the confidence, and the administrative capacity of our countrymen, that we do not always pay sufficient honour to those who, by the exercise of these qualities, have built our empire. The biography of John Jacob, one of the last of the great servants of the East India Company, does, therefore, good service in arousing us to the perception of what we owe to the men whose intellect and strength enable them to confront and grapple with the duties and perils of imperial sovereignty. The story of his life has been too long left untold, and all who take a pride in England's worthies will be grateful to Mr Shand for making John Jacob known to them, and for having done it with a judicious and reticent hand. It is difficult to sketch in plain speech his character, for the imagination is fascinated by the strong nature and the darting and vigorous intellect of the man. He was the daring leader of cavalry, with a dash of ancient chivalry, and he organised a military system. He subdued the proud and warlike mountaineers of the Afghan and Beloochee frontier, and over them he acquired a remarkable influence. He liked them, and treated them kindly or sternly as the case required, but always with justice and honesty. By constructing roads, digging canals, and the encouragement of agriculture and commerce, he converted what was a desert waste into a thriving agricultural community. He wrote as well as he fought and governed. His judgments may be often hasty and his economics open to question; but in his letters and despatches, as in his conduct of war and government, there is a masculine sense and vigour united to imaginative power. His views regarding some of the most delicate and intricate problems of administration cannot be too closely studied by the statesman, and his opinions regarding our military system may be serviceable in this time. Many of his suggestions regarding army reform, which he had so long pressed in vain on the Government, were adopted after a mutiny he had long foretold had shaken to its foundation our Indian empire.

On the 11th of January 1812, three years before the battle of Waterloo, John Jacob was born at Woolavington, in Somersetshire. He was the fifth son of Stephen Long Jacob, vicar of the parish, who came of an old country stock whose healthy minds had been developed by culture and study. The Jacob lads were reared in simple living and the restraints of an

[1] General John Jacob. By Alexander Innes Shand. London: Seeley & Co. 1900.

honourable poverty, a training which enables high or low, civilians or soldiers, to play their part in life with advantage. The vicar, owing to a slender income, had to teach his own boys, and John Jacob on receiving his cadetship went straight from his father's vicarage to Addiscombe, the Military College of the East India Company, which did such a splendid work in its day, and sent to the Indian army such soldiers as Eldred Pottinger, Henry Lawrence, James Brind, Napier of Magdala, and Roberts of Candahar. In January 1828, John Jacob, having been appointed to the Bombay Artillery, set sail for India, where thirty years of strenuous labour awaited him, and where he made his sepulchre. Immediately after his arrival at Bombay he began to work diligently at his profession, and for seven years he had the best training a young soldier can have — regimental duty. He was then intrusted with a small detached command, and he held an administrative post in Gujerat when the first Afghan war broke the long peace in which India had reposed.

The base of our operations for the first invasion of Afghanistan lay in Sind, and in 1838 John Jacob sailed with his battery for Kurrachee, then a small fishing village, now one of the great seaports of our Indian empire. He accompanied as far as Sukkur the Bombay column of the army of the Indus under the command of Sir John Keane. Here he and Lieutenant Corry of her Majesty's 17th Regiment were left behind in charge of 150 Europeans, chosen from every regiment of the army, Royal and Company, and from every troop of horse and company of foot artillery. But Jacob soon had an opportunity of showing his skill and daring in war. No sooner had Keane and his army passed the Bolan than the predatory tribes inhabiting the mountains which run along the entire frontier of Sind from the Bolan to the sea attacked his line of communication. They cut off his envoys and murdered his messengers. By negotiations and offers of money vain efforts were made to obtain a safe passage through their lowland territory. The chiefs were deaf to all persuasion and scorned every offer. Then it was determined to try force. In June 1839 a detachment was ordered to proceed from Sukkur and Shikarpoor against Beja Khan, a stout old bandit, the head of the Doombkees, one of the principal clans, and Jacob was now directed to choose men from the Europeans to form a company of artillery to proceed with the force to Kutchee, the great arid plain between the mountains and Sind, the country of the "blasts of death." Having selected twenty artillerymen and twenty men belonging to the infantry, Jacob with Lieutenant Corry marched from Sukkur on the 3rd of June. "The season," writes Jacob, "was one of intense heat, which has never since been equalled: the thermometer in the hospital-shed at Shikarpoor stood commonly at 130°, and on several days reached the

astonishing height of 140°. One day it even stood at 143°. The wind appeared like a blast from a furnace, and this even at midnight." On the first day's march of ten miles seven of the soldiers were struck dead by the heat, and Lieutenant Corry was brought in dying. "The poor fellow rallied a little at night, but as the heat returned next day he also relapsed and died." Before reaching Shikarpoor, out of a detachment of two officers and forty men, one officer and fifteen men had been struck dead. The military authorities somewhat tardily realised that it was impossible at such a season to prosecute the proposed expedition, and the attempt was abandoned till the following October. Early in that month Major Billamore with about 500 Native Infantry, a single bullock battery of two 24-pounder howitzers and one 6-pounder gun, set forth to chastise the wild tribes of Eastern Beloochistan. As it was thought unadvisable to have any Europeans with the force, Lieutenant Jacob was ordered to form a native company of artillery. He selected some men from the Bombay 5th Regiment of Native Infantry, whose men were, Jacob states, perfect specimens of the Bombay sepoys as described by Sir John Malcolm, "The true descendants of Seevagi's mountain rats, whom not all the pride and power of the armies of Hindustan could prevent from marching to the gates of Delhi." Jacob himself describes them as "small and not at all good-looking, but of an amazing energy and activity, and full of zeal and courage, and with sinews that no labour could tire, and hearts that no danger could taint." It is well to bear in mind that the Sikhs, Afghans, and Goorkas are not the only warlike races from whom we can recruit our Indian army.

The little force crossed the desert and proceeded without opposition to Chuttur and Pooligee, two townships belonging to Beja Khan, who with his people fled to the neighbouring mountains. Major Billamore represented at headquarters that without cavalry he could not act effectively against tribes of horsemen, and a detachment of 180 irregular horse under command of Lieutenant Clarke was ordered to join the force. This detachment had just before been transferred from the Poona Irregular Horse in order to form the nucleus of the new corps at that time to be raised in Sind. Its official title was the Sind Irregulars, but men always spoke and wrote of it as Jacob's Horse. The day that Clarke with his detachment reached Chuttur he got information of a strong band of horsemen having left the hills to plunder. With half his men he went out about midnight, and just before daybreak found them, about 300 in number, dismounted in a corn-field. They had barely time to spring on their mares when Clarke charged, and after a sharp tussle the marauders fled up the dry bed of a river, vigorously pursued by the Sind Horse. About fifty of them were

killed and eleven were taken prisoners.

The country round Shahpoor now began to be nightly raided by numerous bands of tribesmen, who had assembled at Ooch, about twelve miles distant. Major Billamore, with thirty infantry and sixty of the Sind Irregulars, accompanied by Captain Brown, Lieutenants Clarke and Jacob, set forth for it. To understand the operations, the nature of the country must be kept in mind. A sea of gleaming sand spreads westward to a range of bare and barren sandstone hills, at whose entrance there is a little valley some 500 or 600 yards wide, through which runs a mountain torrent of fresh water out of hills of salt. Along the northern end of the torrent-bed the water exudes from the banks and creates a green and moist spot called Ooch. "This place Major Billamore and party had to discover for themselves; no one could be found to guide them; the general direction alone was pointed out and the distance given." After advancing some miles, seeing single horsemen hastening in a certain direction, the officers and troopers galloped after them, and soon found themselves in the middle of the Belooch encampment. Their horsemen, about 100 in number, sprang on their mares, which were always kept saddled, and escaped unhurt. An equal number of men who had no horses, accompanied by some women and children, climbed to the top of the hills, and having placed the women and children in caves, opened a smart match-lock-fire. The troopers were dismounted, and Billamore and his officers led them to the assault. The Beloochees fought hard, and twenty were killed and several wounded before the remainder surrendered. Billamore heard from the prisoners that the party he had surprised were led by two of the most enterprising and most famous of the Belooch warriors, Janee and Rahmut. He determined to remain the night at Ooch, in the hope that they would attack him. But they did not appear, and the next morning he went into the hills with his troopers in quest of them. No trace of them, however, could be found in the unknown and pathless waste. The pursuit was abandoned, and the party returned to Ooch. No sooner had they reached the watering-place and the horses had begun to drink, when as if by magic there suddenly appeared not half a mile off, opposite to an opening in the hills, Janee, Rahmut, and 100 Beloochees, mounted and drawn up in a regular line. In a second the men of the Sind Horse were in their saddles, the next instant they were formed and riding at the enemy:—

"Janee and his men drew their swords and advanced with a shout, and valiant deeds appeared about to take place: the ground looked firm and level for a fair passage of arms, when suddenly every horse of the British detachment sank into the earth, some plunged over girth and saddle-flap, many rolled over and over, and all in hopeless confusion. The cunning Belooch had drawn them into an extensive quicksand. One European officer of the whole party,

being admirably mounted, alone struggled on through it; but Janee, carelessly or generously, took no notice of him as he still rode towards him, but with shouts of laughter the Belooch riders went off at speed, and disappeared from, almost as suddenly as they appeared on, the scene."

Billamore, baffled by his active foe, returned to Sherpoor. The following November his force proceeded in two detachments to enter the Murree and Boogtee hills, wherein the two great tribes, the Doombkees and Jekranees, had found refuge. After defeating the fierce warriors at their fastness called Tructnee, he determined to advance with a portion of his scanty force to Kahun in the heart of the mountains. He considered it important that his artillery should accompany him, in order to show the tribes that their most difficult, high, and rugged hills were not inaccessible to our guns. The nature of the road was, however, stated to be absolutely unfit for the transport of artillery. Jacob was, however, confident, and Billamore allowed him to take a detachment and examine it for himself. He found the road bad in many places, but soon by means of his pioneers made it passable for his guns. Over the hills the artillery carriage was transported with great labour, and Billamore's detachment with their guns reached Kahun in safety. The mountain tribes, finding they were not safe in their rocky fastnesses, came in and surrendered. The object of the expedition having been accomplished, it was determined to return to the plain country as soon as possible. Jacob thought they might make their way back by a nearer route. A herdsman told him there did exist a path over the mountains bounding the south side of the valley of Kahun, which he was willing to point out. Under his guidance Jacob proceeded to the top of the mountain: "The path was only a sheep-walk, and seemed tremendously difficult even for a single horseman; the part over and through the mountain was alone four miles in length. Thus was the pass of Nuffoosk, a place whose name has since become so familiar, then first beheld by European eyes." Jacob and his pioneers set to work at the road over the pass, and in three days it was thought practicable for the artillery. On the fourth the 24-pounder howitzer and the other carriages were dragged over the mountain, and before evening the detachment had crossed Nuffoosk. Next day they descended the great mountain of Surtoff, and reached without adventure Pooligee on the 11th February 1840, about three and a half months after they had left it to enter the hills, then an unknown land. As Jacob writes, "Every object had been fully accomplished without serious loss and without a shadow of a disaster. The mountaineers had been thoroughly beaten whenever encountered: the robbers, who had fled for shelter among them, compelled to surrender. The mountains had been penetrated in every direction, and roads made in the very heart of them." The commander of the expedition had not the pen of a ready

writer, and contented himself with making a verbal report to his superiors, and the gallant adventure would long since have been forgotten had not Sir William Napier's 'History of the Conquest of Sind' provoked "Major Billamore's surviving subaltern" to give an account of it, and to correct the inaccuracies of the historian.

When the field force was disbanded, Jacob returned to regimental duty at Hyderabad. Here he met Outram, who was then Political Agent for Sind, and between the two men, who had much in common, there was laid the foundation of a life-long friendship. The exertions of Jacob on the frontier became known through field and general orders, and led Outram to appoint him to make a reconnaissance of the route from Hyderabad to Nuggar Parkur on the Sind frontier. The Government, not caring to be entirely dependent on the sea-communication between Bombay and Kurrachee, were anxious to discover a land-route from the centre of Sind to the province of Gujerat. Accompanied by only three tribesmen in the service of one of the Ameers, Jacob did the journey in the hottest season of the year at considerable risk. He carefully measured and mapped the road, and made minute notes of the villages, the water-supply, and the agricultural and pastoral resources of the country. In forwarding his report to the Government, Outram wrote:—

"I have the honour to transmit a report on the route from Hyderabad to Naggur Parkur by Lieut. Jacob of the Bombay Artillery, a scientific and enterprising officer, whose zeal and intrepidity in undertaking the journey during the hottest period that has been known in Sind during the memory of man, in preference to continuing the far easier voyage down the river by sea, on which that officer was engaged when requested by me to survey this road, will, I hope, be appreciated by his lordship and considered worthy of notice."

For the important services he had rendered during the hill campaign and his daring reconnaissance, Jacob was appointed in March 1842 to command the Sind Irregular Horse, when that body was augmented and placed in charge of all the Kutchee frontier. On assuming the command he at once took active measures to put down the forays made by the Belooch chiefs across the border. He not only beat them off, but when they planned a bloody inroad he frustrated them by making a raid into their fastnesses. These retaliations laid the foundation of that knowledge of our power which enabled his subsequent conciliatory measures to have their full effect. When Outram was about to leave Sind he wrote, on the 9th of November 1842: "For the first time within the memory of man Kutchee and Upper Sind have been for a whole year entirely free from the irruptions of the hill-tribes, by which villages were annually destroyed, lives and property sacrificed, and the whole country kept in a state of fever." On the 27th of November Jacob was ordered to Sukkur to join the forces that

were gathering there under Sir Charles Napier. Two days after he reached it, and on the 3rd of December the regiment was reviewed by Napier, who expressed himself highly pleased with it, and the old veteran was not easy to please.

The story of the annexation of Sind cannot be both shortly and adequately told; and as the conquest was the result of a policy for which Jacob was in no degree responsible, it would have been wiser if his biographer had not touched so thorny a subject. It is a difficult task to elicit the historic truth from a mass of blue-books, original documents, and miserable personalities. Mr Shand is, however, to be commended for avoiding as much as possible the raking up of the ashes of long-forgotten animosities. The pity of it, that a bitter controversy should have arisen between two noble and generous souls! Napier and Outram regarded the position from totally opposed points of view. Napier considered that as Governor and Commander of the forces he was bound to enforce the acceptance of the treaty which the Governor-General dictated, and this only could be done by an appeal to the God of battles. Outram, as Political Resident, considered it could be done by negotiation. The Ameers were indignant at the terms of the treaty, but in dread of further consequences they signed it. The signing was a mere mockery. War was certain: Napier maintained, and it is not easy to deny it, that not only the Ameers but their friends and others were gathering a vast force to extirpate the English. Delay might be fatal. He determined, therefore, to attack before they could all assemble and crush him by mere weight of numbers. With a force numbering 2200 men, of whom 700 were cavalry and only 800 were Europeans, he attacked at Meeanee an army of more than 20,000 men, and won one of those splendid victories which illustrate the annals of the British in India. For three hours the stubborn contest on the bank of the river Fullailee continued, and still the Beloochs, undismayed at their losses, pressed onwards with furious force. "The bayonet and the sword clashed in full and frequent conflict." At last the Belooch swordsmen began to waver, and the 22nd leaping forward with shouts of victory pushed them backwards into the deep ravine. The superb 9th Cavalry of Bengal broke the line of the enemy on the left, and Jacob's Sind Horse charged into the Ameer's camp, sabring to right and left. "Captain Jacob, though slight of person, meeting a horseman at full gallop, passed his sword with such force through shield and body that the hilt struck strongly against the former." Napier, in his despatch after the battle, said that Jacob had rendered "the most active services long previous to and during the combat. He broke the enemy's camp, from which he drove a body of 3000 or 4000 cavalry."

After the battle of Meeanee Napier entered Hyderabad as

a conqueror, and there prepared to meet the new army which was advancing to crush him. Having called up succours, he moved out of Hyderbad, and ten miles from the city he found himself in a plain in front of the Belooch army. Far and wide it stretched. There were more than 36,000 fighting men before him with sword and shield and matchlock, and they had fifteen guns, eleven being in battery. He had 5000 men all told. The front of the enemy's infantry was covered by a nullah extending a mile, twenty feet wide, eight deep, and scarped so as to form a parapet. His right rested on the river Fullailee, a deep channel which quits the main stream of the Indus. It is a flowing river only when the Indus is in flood: at that time the Indus was low and the Fullailee was dry, but deep in mud. Beyond was a thick *shekargah* or jungle, which prevented the position being turned except by a wide movement. Near the river was the village of Dubba, with loopholed houses filled with armed men. Between Dubba and the front ran another deep nullah, which was planted with the second line of Belooch infantry. Here, too, his guns were placed. His left extended to a wood, and was protected by a nullah in front and a ravine which divided it from the right. All the cavalry were behind in one great mass. The British column formed line —the cavalry being drawn up on the wings, the artillery in the intervals between the regiments. At nine o'clock the battle commenced. Napier, seeing many Beloochees hurrying from their left towards the village, thought they had neglected their right and were hurrying to repair their error. He at once put his troops into movement. Leslie's Horse Artillery advanced, and the rest followed in succession by batteries. Rapidly gaining ground to the extreme right, they obtained raking positions, "crossing their fire with the Horse Artillery so that the bullets tore the thick masses of the enemy's infantry in a terrible manner." Previous to this "Lieut. Smith, thinking of his duty and not of his life, with desperate valour rode foremost and alone to the bank of the first nullah and ascended it. He sought for a place where his guns could pass, and found death! The nullah was filled with Beloochees, and *there the hero fell.*" Meanwhile the 22nd Regiment, followed by a sepoy regiment, had advanced against Dubba. Their march was marked by the dead: "Half the light company were driven by fire from the first nullah, and beyond it the second and greater one was seen more strongly lined with men, while the village suddenly became alive with warriors whose matchlocks could also reach the advancing line." Napier discovered he had made a mistake, and that the rush of men towards the village was to strengthen that flank. "He had neither time nor means to counter-check them, and, as generally happens even with the greatest captains, had to

remedy his error by courage." Placing himself at the head of the 22nd, he was meaning to head the charge, when suddenly came a horseman from the right to tell him all the cavalry of that wing was charging. He went there at full speed, and found the report was correct. Jacob, seeing the enemy moving to the left, thought they were returning, and charged them.

"The whole body of cavalry was at full speed, clearing the nullahs without a check, the riders' spurs deep in their horses' sides, their different war-cries pealing high and clear, their swords whirling above their heads in gleaming circles: there was the fiery Jacob and the terrible Fitzgerald careering alike in the same path of error, while the splendid troopers of the 32nd Cavalry and the red turbans of the wild horsemen of Sind, speeding through smoke and dust, streamed like meteors behind them."

For a moment the general gazed at first with anger and then with admiration, and, putting spur to his horse, he went back with such speed as to reach the 22nd at the moment it was rushing to storm the first nullah.

"Riding to the front rank, he raised that clear high-pitched cry of war which had, at Meeanee, sent the same fiery soldiers to the charge. It was responded to with even greater ardour; for here no check occurred, though the danger and difficulty was greater. Lieutenant Coote first gained the summit of the bank, and tearing a Belooch standard from its bearer, waved it in triumph, while he reeled along the narrow edge fainting from a deep wound in his side. Then, with a deafening shout, the soldiers leaped into the midst of the swordsmen; and they were no sluggards to deal with, for there the black hero Hoche and all the Scindes fought and there they fell."

Strongly and fiercely the enemy fought, but they were driven from Dubba and joined the retreating masses, who were vigorously followed. "The fiery Jacob with his usual impetuosity had pushed so far ahead that he caught sight of the elephant which was bearing Shere Ahmed (the Lion Ameer) away. He might have caught the Ameer and ended the war had not Colonel Pattle, the second in command, deemed it prudent to stop the pursuit." The Ameer fled to his capital; but abandoning it, he sought safety in his desert fortress at Omercote. Jacob was present at its surrender, and continued the pursuit of the Ameer, who however made good his escape across the Indus into the hills. For his services Napier recommended Jacob for the brevet rank of major and the companionship of the Bath. The General Orders by the Governor-General announced that "the conduct of Brevet Captain Jacob is considered to have entitled him to honorary distinction, which cannot be at present conferred on account of his want of rank." The announcement was a severe disappointment to Jacob, and he wrote to his father that he wished he had died at Meeanee.

The victories of Meeanee and Hyderabad were decisive. The Ameers came and submitted and were deposed. The victorious general issued a wise proclamation, announcing that the rights of the landowners

would be scrupulously observed, and no man should suffer any injury in person or property. Two months after the battle of Meeanee Sind was conquered and annexed, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, who had been the victims of a cruel, grinding, alien tyranny. Napier set at once to work to consolidate his conquest by a firm and beneficent administration. He took strenuous means to prevent the disbanded armies of the Beloochees from becoming hordes of banditti, and many a bold robber he converted into a soldier or a policeman. He made the tribes on the border understand that if they raided our frontier or killed our people he could penetrate their most inaccessible strongholds and capture them, and deal out punishment with a heavy hand. The hill-tribes of Kutchee, under the leadership of Beja Khan, had again begun their raids and ravages, and as the winter of 1844-45 drew on, Napier made his preparations for another expedition against them. On the 12th of January 1845 he left Sukkur for Khanghur, the future Jacobabad. The day he reached it Jacob pushed forward to Roza, nine miles to the west. Having refreshed his men, he rode thirty-five miles farther, and when within two miles of Sherpoor he learnt that a son of the chief was holding the village in force.

"I pushed on at a trot, and completely surrounded the village before the alarm was given or any one could escape. Knowing the place well, I at once galloped into an enclosure on one side of the village. The enemy now opened a heavy fire upon us from a high tower and from the houses. I immediately picketed a troop, and took the men into the village on foot, when all opposition ceased, and the robbers were anxious only to hide their arms."

In these few modest words Jacob narrates a prompt and daring feat of arms, and Napier made it the subject of a separate order. He writes:—

"This is a very rare and very glorious instance of perfect discipline, as well as courage, on the part of the Sind Horse; and though to men less acquainted with war it may appear trifling, yet in the mind of the Major-General and Governor it stamps both the Sind Horse and its commandant as first-rate soldiers — prompt, resolute, obedient, and humane, even in the momentary excitement of action against the most furious of enemies."

Another gallant exploit also drew forth the warm approval of the old chief, and it is best told in his own words:—

"Twenty-five brave robbers on foot, well armed with swords and shields and matchlocks, met twenty of the Sind Horse patrolling in the desert. The robbers gave a volley and charged. The Sind Horse met them; a combat with sabres ensued. The Sind Horse had one man killed and two wounded; four horses killed and two wounded. Of the enemy every man fell sword in hand. Quarter was repeatedly offered to those stern gladiators, but they refused, and every robber bit the dust. Honour be to their courage—more honour to their conquerors. Another laurel-leaf has been added to the rich wreath of Jacob's Horse."

After the campaign had been brought to a successful close by the able plan, skilful execution, and personal activity and intrepidity of Napier, Jacob's Horse returned to Hyderabad.

Their commander had recommended that the corps should be increased by a second regiment. The Governor-General and Sir Charles Napier were willing to accede to his proposal, but military precedent was against his claim to command both regiments. Jacob wrote to Napier: "What I want is to be the real commander on whom everything centres, or else to have nothing to do with the matter. I do not write hastily, but have considered the matter well. Let us be a regiment of English squadrons — you can always detach as many of these squadrons as you please, but whatever distance may separate the corps, let us be one as regards command, with one chain of authority throughout." After much correspondence, lengthy and involved, as too often is the nature of official correspondence, the order was received for raising the new regiment, and the Governor-General "deemed it expedient that for the present it shall be under the command of Captain Jacob, that he might superintend the formation and drill." From precedents, the Governor-General observed, "he had been induced in this single instance to depart out of regard to Captain Jacob's reputation and success." The time had, however, come for the great leader of light horse to show his ability as a diplomat and administrator. In January 1847 there is a notice in the regimental records that, "under instructions from Colonel Forbes, commanding at Shekarpoor, and General Hunter, C.B., commanding in Upper Sind, Captain Jacob assumed command of the frontier." He was to establish his headquarters at Khanghur, and the whole of the lower land from the Punjab to Shahpoor in Kutchee was to be under his sway. It was a dreary waste of sand, swept for eight months in the year by burning and noxious winds, and was almost wholly deserted. At Khanghur there was a mud fort and five miserable families, amounting to about twenty souls. The old mud fort has long since disappeared, and near its site there is the large and flourishing town, which Dalhousie commanded should be called after its founder, Jacobabad, or the city of Jacob. Jacob, determined to impress on the people that our occupation was going to be permanent, built for himself and his staff a massive and handsome residence. He planted a garden and embarrassed the Khan of Khelat by sending a present of vegetables. The chief tried the cabbages unsuccessfully as salads, and served the turnips among the rare fruits at dessert. Along the frontier were dotted similar mud forts in which the troops were stationed, and the officers and men were necessarily totally ignorant of the country and of the people. Jacob had the forts dismantled, and abandoned all idea of defensive operations. Every detachment was posted in the open plain, and patrols sent in every direction. Whenever a party of the Sind Horse came on any of the raiders, they attacked them at once, charging any

number, however superior, without the slightest hesitation. Jacob's first year on the border was one of enormous bodily labour. "We had, literally, to lie down to rest with boots and sword on for many months together." Having by the use of force made himself respected, Jacob was able to apply better means and to appeal to higher motives than fear.

"It is moral more than physical force," he writes, "which is required to control predatory tribes: both are doubtless necessary, but the latter is so chiefly to enable us to apply the other. Justice, honesty, high principles, unswerving firmness, and force without violence succeed best with these men, as with others. If we imitate their crimes in pretence of retaliation we only perpetuate the evil. The power of the border marauder does not wholly consist in the damage he is able to cause, or in the terror he is able to inspire, but in the fact that his name and deeds are associated, even in the minds of those he injures, with chivalric daring and attributes not altogether bad. But if the trade of the marauder be proved to be unsuccessful and disreputable, it soon receives the ridicule and contempt of all."

Jacob proved the trade of the marauder to be unsuccessful and disreputable, and under his rule the most active and the most violent of the old robber tribes became cheerful and thriving agriculturists. "And," Jacob adds in memorable words, "believe me, the principles which have guided proceedings in this instance are of universal application. If we *are just* and *true* we shall be trusted even by the Afghans, whatever measures we may find it necessary to undertake." John Jacob was no believer in the strictly close system which discouraged English officers from having intercourse with the barbarians on their confines; he had no faith in the policy of punitive expeditions followed by a precipitate and complete withdrawal, a policy which Lord Lytton very aptly describes as one of alternate vengeance and inaction. Unhappily for the repose and finances of our Indian empire, the system recommended by the wisdom of John Jacob, and followed by Herbert Edwardes and Nicholson, has not been adopted in later days in our northern marches.

The suppression of crime on the border was accompanied by a settlement of the land revenue. Jacob saw that in a country like India the good government of the country and the security and contentment of the people mainly depends on the revenue administration. "We cannot," he writes, "too earnestly bear in mind that a revenue, survey, and settlement is merely a short name for proceedings involving the rights, good order, and advancement of the true interests of the Government we serve and of the people confided to our charge." He realised that it is of the highest importance to a people that the taxes should be of a moderate amount, and they should be so assessed and levied as not to interfere injuriously with industry. Jacob also recognised, what is too often forgotten at the present time, that to leave the people alone and let things grow is the essence of a good administration:—

"Above all, avoid over-governing and unnecessarily interfering. Depend on it, the people understand their own interests better than you. See that all men know and feel secure in their rights. Remove all obstructions to free intercommunication; and then stand by and keep the peace."

The eight years of Jacob's strong rule on the frontier passed away, and in 1856, when Sir Bartle Frere, who had worthily continued the great work which Napier began, had to go home on sick-leave, John Jacob was appointed to succeed him as acting Commissioner of Sind. He addressed himself to his new work with characteristic energy and activity, and was soon deep in plans for the material development of the province. He wished to construct a great canal along the boundary-line between Sind and Khelat territory into the heart of the desert, and to build a railway which should some day run from Kurrachee through the Bolan. Jacob was looking forward to a quiet administration, the only duty of which would be by improved institutions and public works to promote the happiness and prosperity of a contented population, when the sky suddenly became overcast. In October 1856 Bartle Frere wrote to him: "You will see that things look stormy in Europe. I fear they will not leave you long at the ploughshare, and ere long the din of the battle will be putting thoughts of sabres into your head again." In his next letter he informed him that the Persian campaign had been decided on. Jacob strongly disapproved of the war as a needless extension of our responsibilities. He and Bartle Frere agreed it was but a momentary expedient to obtain redress for evils brought on by the weakness and vacillation of statesmen at home. The best security for India, he considered, from threat, insult, or real attack, was to obtain a strong frontier. He proposed the permanent establishment of an outpost at Quetta, commanding on the north and west all the direct routes from Kandahar to the Punjab and on the south the passes leading into Sind. Lord Canning objected, on the ground that "the red line of the map would be again pushed forward westward, and without finding so good a resting-place as now." Twenty years after Jacob's death the red line had again to be pushed westward; Quetta became an outpost of our empire, and by following the principle laid down by Jacob the province of Beloochistan has been reduced from anarchy to order.

When war with Persia was declared Jacob was appointed, at the request of Outram, to command the cavalry. Sudden disturbances in Khelat, however, delayed the Sind Horse and their commandant, and he found Outram at Bushire the very day he was about to embark on his expedition against Mohamerah, a strongly fortified town on the Euphrates. Three thousand men were left at Bushire, and Jacob was placed in command of the garrison. He was mortified at not going forward at the head of his Horse, but Outram softened the unwelcome order by appealing to his soldierly spirit and re-

minding him of the importance of securing the base. On the 26th of March the forts at Mohamerah were occupied; but all further operations were stopped by news reaching Outram (5th April) that peace with Persia had been signed at Paris. A month later Lord Canning telegraphed to Lord Elphinstone: "Write to Sir James Outram that I wish him to return to India immediately, and the same to General Jacob. We want all our best men here." The mutiny that Jacob had foretold had burst. In June Outram left for India, but Jacob was detained, at the desire of the British Minister, in Persia. Four months later he arrived at Bombay. A sore disappointment awaited him. Outram had written to him that he had urged the Governor-General to give him command of the army of Central India then assembling, "and he appears most highly to approve of the idea, satisfied as he is that you, of all men, are best fitted for the great military and political responsibilities which must rest on that commander." On his arrival at Bombay Jacob received a letter from Lord Elphinstone informing him that, as he was unable to wait for him, the command had been given to Sir Hugh Rose, and John Jacob returned to his old duties at Jacobabad. He found the work much increased, and for the first time in his life he found his strength unequal to the task. He was no more than forty-six, but the keen, untiring spirit had fretted the body to decay. He worked on, however, from early morning to midnight. He wrote: "The business I strive to get through daily would be sufficient to overwhelm fifty brains instead of one. I seldom get above three hours' sleep in the twenty-four, and the work will kill me, but I do not regret; for I have proved and established principles and built foundations on which others will be able to work." A friend found him in the desert suffering from sleeplessness and weakness from loss of blood. He consented to return to headquarters, but refused to be carried. He insisted on riding to Jacobabad—a distance of twenty miles—though often bent double in the saddle. His officers entreated him to have medical assistance, but he refused, declaring that all he needed was rest. At midnight on the 6th of December, as his strength was fast ebbing away, they brought to his bedside the troopers whom he *had* often led to the charge and the Belooch chiefs whom he had tamed. Their eyes were dimmed with tears. The next day they carried him to his rest. The officers of the garrison, the troops of the Sind Horse, and the Belooch warriors followed his bier, and many of the peasants joined the procession as it moved to the churchyard. They lowered the body into the grave, and the Beloochees believe that as it lies in their earth his spirit still watches over them. He being dead yet speaketh, how man may be won by courage, love, and justice.

LORD JIM: A SKETCH.[1]

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"THE defeated Sherif Ali had fled the country without making another stand, and when the miserable hunted villagers began to crawl out of the jungle back to their rotting houses, it was Jim who, in consultation with Dain Waris, appointed the headmen. Thus he became the virtual ruler of the land. As to old Tunku Allong, his fears at first knew no bounds. It is said that at the intelligence of the successful storming of the hill he threw himself, face down, flat on the bamboo floor of his audience-hall, and lay motionless for a whole night and a whole day, uttering stifled sounds of such an appalling nature that no man dared approach his prostrate form nearer than a spear's length. He saw himself driven ignominiously out of Patusan, wandering, abandoned, stripped, without opium, without his women, without followers, a fair game for the first comer to kill. Who could resist men led by such a devil? And indeed he owed such authority as he still possessed at the time of my visit to Jim's idea of what was fair alone. The Bugis had been extremely anxious to pay off old scores, and the impassive old Doramin cherished the hope of yet seeing his son ruler of Patusan. During one of our interviews he deliberately allowed me to get a glimpse of this secret ambition. Nothing could be finer in its way than the dignified wariness of his approaches. He himself—he began by declaring—had used his strength in his young days, but now he had grown old and tired. . . . With his imposing bulk and haughty little eyes darting sagacious, inquisitive glances, he reminded one irresistibly of a cunning old elephant; the slow rise and fall of his vast breast went on powerful and regular, like the heave of a calm sea. He too, as he protested, had an unbounded confidence in Tuan Jim's wisdom. If he could only obtain a promise! One word would be enough! . . . His silences, the low rumblings of his voice, recalled the last efforts of a spent thunderstorm.

"I tried to put the subject aside. It was difficult, for there could be no question that Jim had the power; in his new sphere there did not seem to be anything that was not his to hold or to give. But that, I repeat, was nothing in comparison with the notion, which occurred to me just then, while I listened with a show of attention, that he seemed to have

[1] Copyright, 1899, by S. S. M'Clure Co., in the United States of America.

come very near at last to mastering his fate. Doramin was anxious about the future of the country, and I was struck by the turn he gave to the argument. The land remains where God had put it, but white men —he said—they come to us and in a little while they go. They go away. Those they leave behind do not know when to look for their return. They go to their own land, to their people, and so this white man too would. . . . I don't know what induced me to commit myself at this point by a vigorous 'No, no.' The whole extent of this indiscretion became apparent when Doramin, turning full upon me his face, whose expression, fixed in rugged deep folds, remained unalterable, like a huge brown mask, said that this was good news indeed, reflectively; and then wanted to know why.

"His little, motherly, brown witch of a wife sat on my other hand, with her head covered and her feet tucked up, gazing through the great shutter-hole. I could only see a straying lock of grey hair, a high cheek-bone, the slight masticating motion of the sharp chin. Without changing the direction of her eyes, in a pitying voice she asked why was it that he so young had wandered from his home, coming so far, through so many dangers? Had he no household there, no kinsmen in his own country? Had he no old mother, who would always remember his face? . . .

"I was completely unprepared for this. I could only mutter and shake my head vaguely. Afterwards I am perfectly aware I cut a very poor figure trying to extricate myself out of this difficulty. From that moment, however, the old *nakhoda* became taciturn. He was not very pleased, I fear, and evidently I had given him food for thought. Strangely enough, on the evening of that very day (which was my last in Patusan) I was once more confronted with the same question, with the unanswerable why of Jim's fate. And this brings me to the story of his love.

"I suppose you think it is a story that you can imagine for yourselves. We have heard so many such stories, and the majority of us don't believe them to be stories of love at all. For the most part we look upon them as stories of opportunities: episodes of passion at best, or perhaps only of youth and temptation, doomed to forgetfulness in the end, even if they pass through the reality of tenderness and regret. *This* view mostly is right, and perhaps in this case too. . . . Yet I don't know. To tell this story is by no means so easy as it should be—if the ordinary standpoint were adequate. Apparently it is a story very much like the others: for me, however, there is visible in its background the melancholy figure of a woman, the shadow of a cruel wisdom buried in a lonely grave, looking on wistfully, helplessly, with sealed lips. The grave itself, as I came upon it during an early morning stroll, was a rather shapeless brown mound, with an inlaid neat border of white lumps of coral at the

base, and enclosed within a circular fence made of young split saplings, with the bark left on. A garland of leaves and flowers was woven about the heads of the slender posts —and the flowers were fresh.

"Thus, whether the shadow is of my imagination or not, I can at all events point out the significant fact of an unforgotten grave. When I tell you besides that Jim with his own hands had worked at the rustic fence, you will perceive directly the difference, the individual side of the story. There is in his espousal of memory and affection belonging to another human being something characteristic of his seriousness. He had a conscience, and it was a romantic conscience. The wife of the unspeakable Cornelius had no one but her daughter for companion, confidant, and friend. How the poor woman had come to marry the awful little Malacca Portuguese—who was in reality the father of her girl—and how the separation had been brought about, whether by death, which can be sometimes merciful, or by the merciless pressure of conventions, is a mystery to me. From the little which Stein (who knew so many stories) had let drop, I am convinced she was no ordinary woman. Her own father had been a white; a high official; one of the brilliantly endowed men who are not dull enough to nurse a success, and whose careers so often end under a cloud. I suppose she too must have lacked the saving dulness —and her career ended in Patusan. Our common fate . . . for where is the man—I mean a real sentient man—who does not remember vaguely having been deserted in the fulness of possession by some one or something more precious than life? . . . our common fate fastens upon the women with a peculiar cruelty. It does not punish like a master, but inflicts lingering torment, as if to gratify a secret, unappeasable spite. One would think that, appointed to rule on earth, it seems to revenge itself upon the beings that come nearest to rising above the trammels of earthly caution. It is only women who manage to put into their love an element just palpable enough to give one a fright, an extra-terrestrial touch. I ask myself with wonder how the world can look to them—whether it has the shape and substance *we* know, the air *we* breathe! Sometimes I fancy it must be for them a region of unreasonable sublimities seething with the excitement of their adventurous souls, lighted by the glory of all possible risks and renunciations. However, I suspect there are very few women in the world, though of course I am aware of the multitudes of mankind and of the equality of sexes in point of numbers—that is. But I am sure that the mother was as much of a woman as the daughter seemed to be. I cannot help picturing to myself these two, at first the young woman and the child, then the old woman and the young girl, the awful sameness and the swift passage of time, the barrier of forest, the solitude and the turmoil round these two

lonely lives, and every word spoken between them penetrated with sad meaning. There must have been confidences, not so much of fact, I suppose, as of innermost feeling — regrets — fears, warnings — that the younger did not fully understand till the elder was dead— and Jim came along. Then I am sure she understood much — not everything — the fear mostly it seems — the torment of every happiness. Jim called her by a word that means precious, in the sense of a precious gem—jewel. Pretty, isn't it? But he was capable of anything. He was equal to his fortune, as he—after all —must have been equal to his misfortune. Jewel he called her; and he would say this as he might have said 'Jane,' don't you know, with a marital, homelike, peaceful effect. The romance applied to everyday uses. Oh, he was set afloat in a sea of romance, disported himself, darted here and there, rested immersed in it, with the unconscious ease of a first-rate swimmer. I heard the name for the first time ten minutes after I had landed in his courtyard, when, after nearly shaking my arm off, he darted up the steps and began to make a joyous, boyish disturbance at the door under the heavy eaves. 'Jewel! O! Jewel. Quick! Here's a friend come,' . . . and suddenly peering at me in the dim verandah, he mumbled in a hurry, 'You know—this—no confounded nonsense about it— can't tell you how much I owe to her—and so—you understand —I—exactly as if . . .' His hurried, earnest whispering was cut short by the flitting of a white form within the house, a faint exclamation, and a child-like but energetic little face with delicate features and a profound attentive glance peeped out of the inner gloom, like a bird out of the recess of a nest. I was struck by the name, of course; but it was not till later on that I connected it with an astonishing rumour that had met me on my journey, at a little place on the coast about 230 miles south of Patusan river. Stein's schooner put in there, to collect some produce, and I found to my great surprise that it could boast of a third-class deputy-assistant resident; a big, greasy, blinking fellow of a hopelessly mixed descent, with a protruding paunch and turned out, shiny lips. I found him lying extended on his back in a cane chair, odiously unbuttoned, with a large green leaf of some sort on the top of his steaming head, and another in his hand which he used lazily as a fan. Going to Patusan? Oh yes. Stein's Trading Company. He knew. Had a permission. No business of his. It was not so bad there now—and, he went on drawling, 'there's some sort of white vagabond had got in there . . . Eh? What? Friend of yours? So! . . . Then it was true there was one of these *vordamte*— What was he up to? Found his way in, the *skelm!* I had not been sure. Patusan—they cut throats there—no business of ours.' He interrupted himself to groan. 'Phoo! Almighty! Oh, the heat! The heat!

Well, then, there might be something in the story too, after all, and . . .' He shut one of his beastly glassy eyes (the eyelid went on quivering), while he leered at me atrociously with the other. 'Look here,' says he mysteriously, 'if —do you understand?—if he has really got hold of something fairly good—none of your bits of green glass — understand?—I am a government official. You tell the rascal . . . Eh? What? Friend of yours?' . . . He continued wallowing calmly in the chair . . . 'You said so. That's just it; and I am pleased to give you the hint. I suppose you too would like to get something out of it? Don't interrupt. You just tell him I've heard the tale, but to my government I have made no report, not yet. Why make a report? Eh? Tell him to come to me if they let him get alive out of the country. He better look out for that. Eh? I promise to ask no questions. On the quiet—you understand? You too—you shall get something from me. Small commission for the trouble. I am a government official, and make no report. That's business. Understand? I know people that will buy anything worth having, and will give him more money than the scoundrel ever saw in his life. I know his sort.' He fixed me steadfastly with both eyes open, while I stood over him utterly amazed, and asking myself whether he was mad or drunk. He perspired, puffed, moaning feebly, and scratching himself with such horrible composure under my eyes that I could not bear the sight long enough to find out. Next day, talking casually with the people of the little native court of the place, I discovered that a story was travelling slowly down the coast about a mysterious white man in Patusan who had got hold of an extraordinary gem—namely, an emerald of an enormous size, and altogether priceless. The emerald seems to appeal more to the Eastern imagination than any other precious stone. The white man had obtained it, I was told, partly by the exercise of his wonderful strength and partly by cunning, from the ruler of a distant country, whence he had fled instantly, arriving in Patusan in utmost distress, but frightening the people by his extreme ferocity, which nothing seemed able to subdue. Most of my informants were of the opinion that the stone was probably unlucky, — like the famous stone of the Sultan of Succadana, which in the old times had brought wars and untold calamities upon that country. Perhaps it was the same stone—one couldn't say. Indeed the story of a fabulous emerald is as old as the arrival of the first white men in the Archipelago; while less than forty years ago there had even been an official Dutch inquiry into the truth of it. Such a jewel—it was explained to me by the old fellow from whom I heard most of this amazing Jim-myth—a sort of scribe to the wretched little Rajah of the place;—such a jewel, he

said, cocking his poor purblind eyes up at me (he was sitting on the cabin floor out of respect), is best preserved by being concealed about the person of a woman. Yet it is not every woman that would do. She must be young—he sighed deeply—and insensible to the seductions of love. He shook his head sceptically. But such a woman seemed to be actually in existence. He had been told of a tall girl, whom the white man treated with great respect and care, and who never went forth from the house unattended. People said the white man could be seen with her almost any day; they walked side by side, openly, he holding her arm under his—pressed to his side—thus—in a most extraordinary way. This might be a lie, he conceded, for it was indeed a strange thing for any one to do: on the other hand, there could be no doubt she wore the white man's jewel concealed upon her bosom."

CHAPTER XXIX.

"This was the theory of Jim's marital evening walks. I made a third on more than one occasion, unpleasantly aware every time of Cornelius, who nursed the aggrieved sense of his legal paternity, slinking in the neighbourhood with that peculiar twist of his mouth as if he were perpetually on the point of gnashing his teeth. But do you notice how, three hundred miles beyond the end of telegraph cables and mail-boat lines, the haggard utilitarian lies of our civilisation wither and die, to be replaced by pure exercises of imagination, that have the futility, often the charm, and sometimes the deep hidden truthfulness, of works of art? Romance had singled Jim for its own—and that was the true part of the story, which otherwise was all wrong. He did not hide his jewel. In fact, he was extremely proud of it.

"It comes to me now that I had, on the whole, seen very little of her. What I remember best is the even, olive pallor of her complexion, and the intense blue-black gleams of her hair. She wore cavalierly a small crimson cap, something like a fez. Her movements were free, quick, and she blushed a dusky red. While Jim and I were talking, she would come and go with rapid glances at us, leaving on her passage an impression of grace and charm, youth and gravity, and a distinct suggestion of watchfulness. Her manner presented a curious combination of shyness and audacity. Every pretty smile was succeeded swiftly by a look of silent, repressed anxiety, as if put to flight by the recollection of some abiding danger. Or she would sit down and, with her soft cheek dimpled by the knuckles of her little hand, she would listen to our talk; her big clear eyes remained fixed intently on our lips, as though our words had a visible shape. Her mother had taught her to read and

write; she had learned a good bit of English from Jim, and she spoke it most amusingly, with his own clipping, boyish intonation. Her tenderness hovered over him like a flutter of wings. She lived so completely in his contemplation that she had acquired something of his outward aspect, something that recalled him in her movements, in the way she stretched her arm, turned her head, directed her glances. Her vigilant affection had an intensity that made it almost perceptible to the senses; it seemed actually to exist in the ambient matter of space, to envelop him like a peculiar fragrance, to dwell in the sunshine like a tremulous, subdued, and impassioned note. I suppose you think that I too am romantic, but it is a mistake. I am relating to you the sober impressions of a bit of youth, of a strange uneasy romance that had come in my way. I observed with interest the work of his—well—good fortune. He was jealously loved, but why she should be jealous, and of what, I could not tell. The land, the people, the forests were her accomplices, guarding him with vigilant accord, with an air of seclusion, of mystery, of invincible possession. There was no appeal, as it were; he was imprisoned within the very freedom of his power, and she, though ready to make a footstool of her head for his feet, guarded her conquest inflexibly—as though he were hard to keep. The very Tamb' Itam, marching on our journeys upon the heels of his white lord, with his head thrown back, truculent and be-weaponed like a janissary, with kris, chopper, and lance (besides carrying Jim's gun); even Tamb' Itam allowed himself to put on the airs of uncompromising guardianship, like a surly devoted jailer ready to wait hand and foot, to lay down his life if need be for his captive. On the evenings when we sat up late his dumb vague form would pass and repass under the verandah, with noiseless footsteps, or lifting my head I would unexpectedly make him out standing rigidly erect in the shadow. As a general rule he would vanish after a time, without a sound. When we rose he would spring up close to us as if from the ground, ready for any orders Jim might wish to give. She too, I believe, never went to sleep till we had separated for the night. More than once I saw her and Jim through the window of my room come out together quietly and lean on the rough balustrade — two white forms very close, his arm about her waist, her head on his shoulder. Their soft murmurs reached me, penetrating, tender, with a calm sad note in the stillness of the night, like a self-communion of one being carried on in two tones. Later on, tossing on my bed under the mosquito-net, I was sure to hear slight creakings, faint breathing, a throat cleared cautiously; I would know that Tamb' Itam was still on the prowl. Though he had (by the favour of the white lord) a house in the compound, had 'taken wife,'

and had lately been blessed with a child, I believe that, during my stay at all events, he slept on the verandah every night. It was very difficult to make this faithful and grim retainer talk. Even Jim himself was answered in jerky short sentences, under protest as it were. Talking, he seemed to imply, was no business of his. The longest speech I heard him volunteer was one morning when, suddenly extending his hand towards the courtyard, he pointed at Cornelius and said, 'Here comes the Nazarene.' I don't think he was addressing me, though I stood at his side; his object seemed rather to awaken the indignant attention of the universe. Some muttered allusions, which followed, to dogs and the smell of roast-meat, struck me as singularly felicitous. The courtyard, a large square space of beaten earth as hard as asphalt, was one torrid blaze of sunshine, and Cornelius was creeping across with an inexpressible effect of stealthiness, of secret slinking, though he was bathed in intense light, and in full view from the house and every other building within the enclosure. He reminded one of everything that is unsavoury. His slow laborious walk resembled the creeping of a repulsive beetle, the legs alone moving with horrid industry while the body glided evenly. I suppose he made straight enough for the place where he wanted to get to, but his progress with one shoulder carried forward seemed oblique. He was often seen circling slowly amongst the sheds, as if following a scent; passing before the verandah with upward stealthy glances; disappearing without haste round the corner of some hut. That he seemed free of the place demonstrated Jim's absurd carelessness or else his infinite disdain, for Cornelius had played, to say the least of it, a very dubious part in a certain episode which might have ended fatally for Jim. As a matter of fact, it had redounded to his glory. But everything redounded to his glory; and it was the irony of his good fortune that he, who had been too careful of it once, seemed to bear a charmed life.

"You must know he had left Doramin's place very soon after his arrival — much too soon, in fact, for his safety, and of course a long time before the war. He was actuated by a sense of duty. He had to look after Stein's business, he said. Hadn't he? To that end he crossed the river and took up his quarters with Cornelius. How the latter had existed through the troubled times I can't say. As Stein's agent, after all, he must have had Doramin's protection in a measure; and in one way or another he had managed to wriggle through all the deadly complications, while I have no doubt that his conduct, whatever it might have been, was marked by that abjectness which was like the stamp of the man. That was his characteristic; he was fundamentally and outwardly abject, as other men are markedly of a generous, distinguished, or venerable appear-

ance. It was the element of his nature which permeated all his acts and passions and emotions; he raged abjectly, smiled abjectly, was abjectly sad; his civilities and his indignations were alike abject. I am sure his love would have been the most abject of sentiments, but can one imagine a loathsome insect in love. And his loathsomeness too was abject, so that a simply disgusting person would have appeared noble by his side. He has his place neither in the background nor in the foreground of the story; he simply hangs on to it, tainting the fragrance of its youth and of its naïveness.

"His position in any case could not be other than extremely miserable, yet it may very well be that he found some advantages in it. Jim told me he had been received at first with an abject display of the most amicable sentiments. 'The fellow apparently couldn't contain himself for joy,' said Jim with disgust. 'He flew at me every morning to shake both my hands—confound him! but I could never tell whether there would be any breakfast. If I got three meals in two days I considered myself jolly lucky, and he made me sign a chit for ten dollars every week. Said he was sure Mr Stein did not mean him to keep me for nothing. Well — he kept me on nothing as near as possible. Put it down to the unsettled state of the country, and made as if to tear his hair out, begging my pardon twenty times a-day, so that I had at last to entreat him not to worry. It made me sick. Half the roof of his house had fallen in, and the whole place seemed mangy, with wisps of dry grass sticking out, and broken mats flapping about on every wall. He did his best to make out that Mr Stein owed him money on the last three years' trading, but his books were all torn, and some were missing. He tried to hint it was his late wife's fault. Disgusting scoundrel! At last I had to forbid him to mention his late wife at all. It made Jewel cry. I couldn't discover what became of all the trade-goods; there was nothing in the store but rats, having a high old time amongst a litter of brown paper and old sacking. I was assured on every hand that he had a lot of money buried somewhere, but of course could get nothing out of him. It was the most miserable existence I led there in that wretched house. I tried to do my duty by Stein, but I had also other matters to think of. When I escaped to Doramin old Tunku Allang got frightened and returned all my things. It was done with no end of mystery through a Chinaman who keeps a small shop here; but as soon as I went to live with Cornelius it began to be said openly that the Rajah had made up his mind to have me killed before long. Pleasant, wasn't it? And I couldn't see what was there to prevent him if he really *had* made up his mind. The worst of it was, I couldn't help feeling I wasn't doing any good either for Stein or for myself. Oh! it was beastly—the whole six weeks of it.'"

CHAPTER XXX.

"He told me further that he didn't know what made him hang on—but of course we may guess. He sympathised deeply with the defenceless girl, at the mercy of that 'mean, cowardly scoundrel.' It appears Cornelius led her an awful life, stopping only short of actual ill-usage, for which he had not the pluck, I suppose. He insisted upon her calling him father—'and with respect too—with respect,' he would scream, shaking a little yellow fist in her face. 'I am a respectable man, and what are you? Tell me—what are you? You think I am going to bring up somebody else's child and not be treated with respect? You ought to be glad I let you. Come—say Yes, father. . . . No? . . . You wait a bit.' Thereupon he would begin to abuse the dead woman, till the girl would run off with her hands to her head. He pursued her, dashing in and out and round the house and amongst the sheds, would drive her into some corner, where she would fall on her knees stopping her ears, and then he would stand at a distance and declaim filthy denunciations at her back for half an hour at a stretch. 'She was a devil, a deceitful devil—and you too are a devil,' he would shriek in a final paroxysm of rage, pick up a bit of dry earth or a handful of mud (there was plenty of mud around the house), and fling it into her hair. Sometimes, though, she would hold out full of scorn, confronting him in silence, her face sombre and contracted, and only now and then uttering a word or two that would make the other jump and writhe with the sting. Jim told me these scenes were terrible. It was indeed a strange thing to come upon in a wilderness. The endlessness of such a subtly cruel situation was appalling—if you think of it. The respectable Cornelius (Inchi Nelyus the Malays called him, with a grimace that meant many things) was a much-disappointed man. I don't know what he had expected would be done for him in consideration of his marriage; but evidently the liberty to steal, and embezzle, and appropriate to himself for many years and in any way that suited him best, the goods of Stein's Trading Co. (Stein kept the supply up unfalteringly as long as he could get his skippers to take it there) did not seem to him a fair equivalent for the sacrifice of his honourable name. Jim would have enjoyed exceedingly thrashing Cornelius within an inch of his life; on the other hand, the scenes were of so painful a character, so abominable, that his impulse would be to get out of earshot, to spare the girl's feelings. They left her agitated, speechless, clutching her bosom now and then with a stony, desperate face. Jim would lounge up and say unhappily, 'Now—come—really—what's the use—you must try to eat a bit,' or give

some such mark of sympathy. Cornelius would keep on slinking through the doorways, across the verandah and back again, as mute as a fish, and with malevolent, mistrustful, underhand glances. 'I can stop his game,' Jim said to her once. 'Just say the word.' And do you know what she answered? She said — Jim told me impressively — that if she had not been sure he was intensely wretched himself, she would have found the courage to kill him with her own hands. 'Just fancy that! The poor devil of a girl, almost a child, being driven to talk like that,' he exclaimed in horror. It seemed impossible to save her not only from that mean rascal but even from herself! It wasn't that he pitied her so much, he affirmed; he was afraid for her. It was more than pity; it was as if he had something on his conscience, while that life went on. To leave the house would have been like a desertion. He had understood at last that there was nothing to expect from a longer stay, neither accounts nor money, nor truth of any sort, but he stayed on, exasperating Cornelius to the verge, I won't say of insanity, but almost of courage. Meantime he felt all sorts of dangers thickening about him. Doramin had sent over twice a trusty servant to tell him seriously that he could do nothing for his safety unless he would recross the river again and live amongst the Bugis as at first. People of every condition used to call, often in the dead of night, in order to disclose to him plots for his assassination. He was to be poisoned. He was to be stabbed in the bath-house. Arrangements were being made to have him shot from a boat on the river. Each of these informants professed himself to be his very good friend. It was enough—he told me—to spoil a fellow's rest for ever. Something of the kind was extremely possible—nay, probable—but the lying warnings gave him only the sense of deadly scheming going on all around him, on all sides, in the dark. Nothing more calculated to shake the best of nerve. Finally, one night, Cornelius himself, with a great apparatus of alarm and secrecy, unfolded in solemn wheedling tones a little plan wherein for one hundred dollars—or even for eighty; let's say eighty—he, Cornelius, would procure a trustworthy man to smuggle Jim out of the river, all safe. There was nothing else for it now—if Jim cared a pin for his life. What's eighty dollars? A trifle. An insignificant sum. While he, Cornelius, who had to remain behind, was absolutely courting death by this proof of devotion to Mr Stein's young friend. The sight of his abject grimacing was—Jim told me—very hard to bear: he clutched at his hair, beat his breast, rocked himself to and fro with his hands pressed to his stomach, and actually pretended to shed tears. 'Your blood be on your own head,' he squeaked at last, and rushed out. It is a curious question how far Cornelius was sincere in that performance.

Jim confesses he did not sleep a wink after he had gone. He lay on his back on a thin mat spread over the bamboo flooring, trying idly to make out the bare rafters, and listening to the rustlings in the torn thatch. A star suddenly twinkled through a hole in the roof. His brain was in a whirl; but, nevertheless, it was on that night that he matured his plan for overcoming Sherif Ali. It had been the thought of all the moments he could spare from the hopeless investigation into Stein's affairs, but the notion —he says—came to him then all at once. He could see, as it were, the guns mounted on the top of the hill. He got very hot and excited lying there; sleep was out of the question more than ever. He jumped up, and went out barefooted on the verandah. Walking silently, he came upon the girl standing under the wall, as if on the watch. In his then state of mind it did not surprise him to see her up, nor yet to hear her ask in an anxious whisper where Cornelius could be. He simply said he did not know. She moaned a little, and peered into the *campong*. Everything was very quiet. He was possessed by his new idea, so full of it that he could not help telling the girl all about it at once. She listened, clapped her hands lightly, whispered softly her admiration, but was evidently on the alert all the time. It seems he had been used to make a confidant of her all along, and that she could and did give him a lot of useful hints as to Patusan affairs there is no doubt. He assured me more than once that he had never found himself the worse for her advice. At any rate, he was proceeding to explain his plan fully to her there and then, when she pressed his arm once, and vanished from his side. Then Cornelius appeared from somewhere, and, perceiving Jim, ducked sideways, as though he had been shot at, and afterwards stood very still in the dusk. At last he came forward prudently, like a suspicious cat. 'There were some fishermen there — with fish,' he said in a shaky voice. 'To sell fish—you understand.' . . . It must have been then two o'clock in the morning—a likely time for anybody to hawk fish about!

"Jim, however, let the statement pass, and did not give it a single thought. Other matters occupied his mind, and besides he had neither seen nor heard anything. He contented himself by saying, 'Oh!' absently, got a drink of water out of a pitcher standing there, and leaving Cornelius a prey to some inexplicable emotion — that made him embrace with both arms the worm-eaten rail of the verandah as if his legs had failed—went in again and lay down on his mat to think. By-and-by he heard stealthy footsteps outside. They stopped. A voice whispered tremulously through the wall, 'Are you asleep?' 'No! What is it?' he answered briskly, and there was an abrupt movement outside, and then all was still, as if the whisperer had been startled. Extremely annoyed at this, Jim came out impetuously, and Cor-

nelius with a faint shriek fled along the verandah as far as the steps, where he hung on to the broken banister. Very puzzled, Jim called out to him from the distance to know what the devil he meant. 'Have you given your consideration to what I spoke to you about?' asked Cornelius, pronouncing the words with difficulty, like a man in the cold fit of a fever. 'No!' shouted Jim in a passion. 'I did not, and I don't intend to. I am going to live here, in Patusan.' 'You shall d-d-die h-h-here,' answered Cornelius, still shaking violently, and in a sort of expiring voice. The whole performance was so absurd and provoking that Jim didn't know whether he ought to be amused or angry. 'Not till I had seen you tucked away, you bet,' he called out, exasperated yet ready to laugh. Half seriously (being excited with his own thoughts, you know) he went on shouting, 'Nothing can touch me! You can do your damnedest.' Somehow the shadowy Cornelius far off there seemed to be the hateful embodiment of all the annoyances and difficulties he had found in his path. He let himself go—his nerves had been overwrought for days—and called him many pretty names,—swindler, liar, sorry rascal: in fact, carried on in an extraordinary way. He admits he passed all bounds, that he was quite beside himself—defied all Patusan to scare him away—declared he would make them all dance to his own tune yet, and so on, in a menacing, boasting strain. Perfectly bombastic and ridiculous, he said. His ears burned at the bare recollection. Must have been off his chump in some way. . . . The girl, who was sitting with us, nodded her little head at me quickly, frowned faintly, and said, 'I heard him,' with childlike solemnity. He laughed and blushed. What stopped him at last, he said, was the silence, the complete deathlike silence, of the indistinct figure far over there, that seemed to hang collapsed, doubled over the rail in a weird immobility. He came to his senses, and ceasing suddenly, wondered greatly at himself. He watched for a while. Not a stir, not a sound. 'Exactly as if the chap had died while I had been making all that noise,' he said. He was so ashamed of himself that he went indoors in a hurry without another word, and flung himself down again. The row seemed to have done him good though, because he went to sleep for the rest of the night like a baby. Hadn't slept like that for weeks. 'But *I* didn't sleep,' struck in the girl, one elbow on the table and nursing her cheek. 'I watched.' Her big eyes flashed, rolling a little, and then she fixed them on my face intently."

(To be continued.)

THE ELDER BROTHER OF THE SHÁH.

In the last fifteen years the Zillu's-Sultán has paid not more than a couple of visits to the seat of the central Government in Teherán, and it is with these two visits that this paper deals. Of these, the first, which took place in his father's reign, saw him fall, in the month of February 1888, from the height of his all but independent control over two-fifths of the whole of Persia; while the second, occurring, as it did, ten years later, might be said to be the Zill's private, rather than his official, recognition of his younger brother as his sovereign Lord. Enough has been said of the Zillu's-Sultán's private life in my sketches of his sons. This attempt to sum up his past history and his future hopes, I would begin with an interesting episode which was related to me by his favourite son, Akbar Mirza, who, on the occasion of the second journey to Teherán, accompanied his father as far as Gameshló. This custom of setting the traveller on his way, which is regarded as an act of friendship, is called *badraka;* while the ceremony of going out to meet a new arrival, a more formal undertaking, is called *istikbál.* Akbar Mirza, who had taken French leave of me upon his *badraka*, met with an *istikbál* on the threshold of the classroom, which was little to his liking.

"You are the master!" he cried. "Please to pardon me, monsieur, and I will tell you a new and true story of his Highness."

Artful dodger! and to stay my hand at the second stroke too!

Akbar Mirza cut a wry face when he sat down; then, having gained his point, he told me the following escapade of his father:—

On the eve of his last journey to the capital, the Zillu's-Sultán disguised himself in the dress of a Persian *naukar* (servant), and, mounting his horse, pricked it over a plain, where the vegetation grew as scant as hair in leprosy, at a breathless gallop. Nor did he draw rein until he had reached the foot of a flame-red mountain, where a shepherd, old and loquacious, was watching his flock.

The customary greeting over, there was silence for a spell.

"There is a rumour abroad," said the Prince at last, "that his Imperial Highness Zillu's-Sultán has been summoned to Teheran by his brother, the Sháh."

The words were toned to an inquiry, but the shepherd, turning a wary eye upon the horseman, made a guarded reply.

"How should I know when you, a *naukar* of his Highness, are in doubt!" said he.

"By the ambrosial beard of Fath-'Alí Sháh!" cried the Zill, laughing, "I am not a *naukar* of the Zillu's-Sultán, nor was I ever in his service. I am ac-

quainted with the Prince, it is true, and——"

"I beg leave to state for your service," interrupted the shepherd, "that I made a mistake. If you were our Prince's *naukar*, he would tie that tongue of yours with the camel-tie to keep it from trespassing upon his forbearance."

"Tell me," replied the Zill, smiling, "by my soul! by the king's salt! tell me, how often you have seen this Prince of yours?"

"I have seen him as often as there are days in the year; I saw him in his power and glory—the wolves had a hunter then, and the sheep a shepherd, for our Prince—may his family prosper!—held all the evil-doers of central and southern Irán within his grasp, and even the Soldúz he kept from pillaging. Yes, I saw him on his way to Teherán, ten years ago; his *taleh* [luck] was bad then. But now, upon his second visit, his star shall be more fortunate; for it is written in the book of Fate that our Prince shall reign over us in Irán."

"I would not weary you with too many questions," said the Zillu's-Sultán, smiling a broad ironic smile, "lest you should bridle my tongue with the camel-tie to keep it from trespassing upon your forbearance; nevertheless, since it should lie within the limits of your mercy and goodness to possess your soul in patience——"

"Do not coin your words so fast, friend!" cried the shepherd. "Was not the book of Fate revealed to me last night as I lay asleep on the mountain-top? Did not I see the book wide open upon my knees, and the finger of God, did it not point to the passage wherein the destiny of our Prince was set forth in plain bold Persian *naskh*?"[1]

The Zillu's-Sultán smiled his broad ironic smile. "If the book had been written in *shikastah*,"[2] said he, "the worldly destiny of your Prince might have been closed to the intelligence of everybody except an angel. But, praise be to Alláh who dictated the words in Persian, and to the heavenly *mírza* [secretary] who penned them in *naskh*, I shall now share with you and the angelic hosts the secret of your Prince's future career. You have my permission to speak. Continue your story, and beware lest you utter the thing that is not, for the power of making you tell the truth is mine."

The last words, toned to a brazen ring of command, gave the shepherd pause, and laid his pride prostrate.

"By the salt of his Highness," he cried in a voice of whispering humbleness, "by your life, and by the beard of the Prophet, the words, your Excellency, were these: 'Thus doth the mighty, the wise God, reveal his will unto thee, that thou mayest gladden the heart of his servant the Zillu's-Sultán. It wanteth little but that the heavens of the Prince's destiny be rent in

[1] A legible writing, much used in transcribing books.
[2] A rapid short hand, hard to read, employed in letter-writing.

sunder from above, at the dawn of his coming majesty. God leadeth whom he pleaseth into his mercy, and it shall come to pass that God will lead the Zillu's-Sultán to the throne of his fathers.' And may I eat dirt if I speak not the truth."

The Zillu's-Sultán fell into a muse, and when he spoke again it was to swear by his father's soul that the Prince, his friend, desired nothing less than the fulfilment of so high a destiny.

"If I know anything of our Prince and his sovereign spirit," retorted the shepherd, "he will have cause to change his mind upon his arrival at his brother's Court."

"How so?"

"What! have not you lived long enough in the world to have heard the story of the Zillu's-Sultán and his younger brother's handkerchief? Know, then, that Nasiru'd-Dín Sháh—may Alláh burn his assassin for ever in hell-fire!—was talking one day to his two sons, and the question arose as to which should stand at his right hand: our Prince, the Zillu's-Sultán, who was the first-born, or Mozufferu'd-Dín Mirza, who was the Heir-Apparent. And it came to pass, in the heat of the dispute, that Mozufferu'd-Dín Mirza, who was about to wipe his nose, dropped his handkerchief, and it fell at the feet of the Zillu's-Sultán. Then Nasiru'd-Dín Sháh, who loved a joke better than much fine gold, said to his beloved first-born, 'Pick up the handkerchief and give it to Mozufferu'd-Dín Mirza,' and that he said in order that he might test the spirit of our little Prince, who would not dare to disobey him. What should our little Prince do? If he picked up the handkerchief, he would bend his back to his younger brother. If he disobeyed the Sháh, he would get the sticks——"

Here the shepherd, having reached the climax of his story, took out his pipe, and fell to smoking in a stony silence.

"Go on, go on!" cried the Zillu's-Sultán, laughing.

"If you think I am the man to throw away the story for nothing, your wit is even less ready than your cash!"

The Prince, hailing the repartee with a good-humoured laugh, greased the shepherd's tongue with a *tumán*, for which the latter repaid him with kind thanks and the end of the story.

"Yes; a third course was open to the quick-witted," he resumed; "and wisdom is better than wealth. What our little Prince did was simple. He flung back his head, stood bolt-upright, and drew his sword. 'Here is your pocket-handkerchief on the point of the blade!' he said. 'It will serve as a bandage if you should cut your finger in taking it off!' From this it is plain that our Prince would rather accept the crown from his younger brother than bow his back to him in a lowly salám. And if the worst befall, then will I do for our Prince what Gaveh did for Feridun."

"By the standard of the great blacksmith!" cried the Prince in a voice of thunder, "your tongue shall be torn from your deceitful mouth, that you may learn that I allow neither strife nor treason in my province; and then I will send you back to the master who pays you. Liar — traitor — spy!"

"Mashalláh!" (Praise Alláh!) cried the shepherd in a voice of unfeigned amazement, then fell upon his knees and bowed his forehead to the dust. "Our Prince! his Highness! I have seen our Prince! My ear is in your hand; I shall die happy, having seen you! I am a liar, it is true; but, by the head of your Highness! I am not a traitor, and may my mother burn in hell for ever if I be a spy!"

Then the Zillu's-Sultán burst into a roar of laughter, saying, "Truly, my friend, you can say now with an easy conscience that you have seen your Prince. Go in peace, and may Alláh chasten you from lying. *Khudá háfiz*" (good-bye), and with these words the Zillu's-Sultán legged it along to his camp at Gameshló.

. . . . . .

"Mosie, mon ami," said Homayun Mirza, as soon as Akbar Mirza had finished the story, "tell me, by your life, why his Highness is not the Sháh."

"The Sháh of Persia, being a Kajar," I replied, "must be of royal birth on his mother's side."

"And the mother of his Highness, was she not a princess of the house of Kajar, monsieur?" asked Feridun Mirza.

"No; she was the daughter of a *gholám* [outrider] in the service of Nasiru'd-Din Sháh's uncle."

"*My* mother is a princess," said Feridun Mirza.

"Mashalláh!" cried Akbar Mirza with a ringing laugh. "I don't care a rap, monsieur, who my grandmother was. I only know that I am proud to be my father's son."

"Et moi donc!" cried Bahram Mirza, who then went on to relate the main facts in his father's career.

Now, when his Highness Zillu's-Sultán was at the zenith of his power, he collected a great army that was well drilled, well equipped, and well paid, and this he did to support the Government in all good works. Was not he the king's son and his faithful subject? And the tribesmen of the western provinces, do they not belong to the fiercest and most turbulent tribes in Persia? And if so, was it not necessary, in the interests of peace and the service of the Sháh, to form such an army as should intimidate these unruly subjects? Of course it was; and so the Zill, knowing that he had his cause just, threw his whole heart and soul into the training of the king's army under Austrian officers. If his father, the king, trusted him not, why had he made his "beloved first-born" the ruler over so many provinces? The truth is that the king trusted his son in the beginning, and would have trusted him until the end, only there were two men in Teherán who

watched the growth of his army with jealous eyes. The first was the Zill's enemy at Court, a very powerful statesman; the second was the Russian Minister, who did not like to see so many trained soldiers in that part of Persia, which might be said to lie within the English sphere of influence. And so it came to pass that these two men, the one working to overthrow the Zill and the other to hasten the downfall of Persia, succeeded at last in arousing the suspicions of the Sháh, who sent an officer to Isfahán in order to report upon the army which his Highness had formed there. Now, if the Zill had been a traitor to the king he would have done one of two things: either he would have defied his father, or he would have concealed from the officer the full strength of his military power. The Zillu's-Sultán did neither the one nor the other. A traitor had been the master of the situation; but the Sháh's son, being a loyal subject and having nothing to conceal, showed the officer everything, and treated him with the best marks of friendship and hospitality. When the officer returned to Teherán, he told the king what he had seen, and the king, growing either jealous or suspicious, reduced the numbers of the Zillu's-Sultán's troops. This done, his Highness set out for Teherán and threw himself at his father's feet, saying, "What evil have I done, O my father, that you should turn away the light of your countenance from me? Am not I your beloved first-born and your faithful subject?" But the king hardened his heart, and would not listen to the voice of his son, who had no other choice than to tender his resignation of all the provinces under his rule except the province of Isfahán. And all these things took place in the year 1888 *anno domini*—that is to say, in the year 1306 of the *Hijrah*.

"Why did not the Queen," said Bahram Mirza, "who made my father a Grand Commander of the Star of India in the days of his power, come to his support in the hour of his need? Is not my father a faithful friend of the Queen of England? and are not his enemies hers, and her enemies his? Is not my father right to be on the side of England? and since my father was, and is, on the English side, why is it that England turned her back upon him ten years ago?"

And echo answers Why? I shall return to Bahram Mirza's question at the end of the article. Fortunately for my reputation, the conversation, thanks to Feridun Mirza, now flowed into a safer channel.

"You ask far too many questions, cher ami," said Feridun Mirza. "Monsieur is not interested in the past, nor are we. The past is dead. We live in the present, and our hopes are cast in this the second journey of his Highness to Teherán—not in the visit of ten years ago; we all know how that ended. What I should like to know is this: Will the Sháh, his brother, be kinder to his

Highness than was his father, the Sháh? and if so, what new dignity and honour will be conferred upon him? These are the questions which lie near to my heart."

"Possess your heart in patience, then," I replied.

"Très bien, monsieur," replied Feridun Mirza. "The life of his Highness is safe, thanks be to God, for did he not kill the fatted sheep on the first day of the moon, and give the flesh thereof to the poor and hungry? and will he not do so again on the first day of the next new moon? and have we not seen the fatted sheep led forth between two *naukars* on the first day of every new month, monsieur; to be patted on the head by his Highness, ere it fell to the butcher's knife?"

"Certainly we have, my boy," I replied.

"Then why do you smile, monsieur? Is not his Highness alive and in good health? and since all is well with his Highness, is it not his bounden duty to propitiate Alláh by sacrificing a sheep every month for the poor and needy? Shall not Alláh protect those who feed the hungry and succour the weak?"

"Inshalláh!" I replied.

"And what do you think that the Sháh will give to his Highness, monsieur?" asked Feridun Mirza. But this was a question that it entered not into my head to answer, although I was in an alien land.

Many days wore away, then came the news that his Highness had reached the town of Kom, and that he had called upon his (alleged) enemy, the Aminu's-Sultán, and had made his peace with him. And then, again, after many days, we heard of the Prince's arrival at his brother's Court, and of the gracious reception that he met with there.

"You are my heart, and I am your soul," his Majesty is reported to have said to his elder brother, "and therefore it behoves us to work together, heart and soul, for the progress and welfare of our beloved country."

Gracious words and wise — may they bring forth fruit in due season!

And at last came rumours of promotions, setting every tongue in the bazaars on the wag — a subdued murmur rising, as the reports grew more and more conflicting, to a ceaseless buzz as of a myriad drones on the hum. The king was dead,—had died long ago; his Ministers had kept his death secret, awaiting the arrival of the brother who should succeed him. The king was alive and in the best of health,—had never known a day's sickness since he ascended the throne of his father. The king, though alive, was a martyr to all the diseases that flesh is heir to, and was about to abdicate in favour of his elder brother. The Zillu's-Sultán had been proclaimed Sháh of Persia, his brother being long dead. The Zillu's-Sultán, having closed his brother's eyes in death, would be proclaimed king on the morrow. The Sháh was going to Europe forthwith in order

to consult the best physicians there, and the Zillu's-Sultán was to take up his abode in Teheran as Prince Regent. The Sháh was not going to Europe, having no need to consult the physicians there; and the Zillu's-Sultán, while he would retain the governorship of Isfahán, had been commanded to proceed at once to Meshed as Governor-General of the province. There was no question of the Zillu's-Sultán's leaving the seat of the central Government, because his Majesty was about to confer upon him the dignity of the First Minister of State. The Zillu's-Sultán, having waived the privilege of the premiership out of friendship for the Aminu's-Sultán, had been promoted to the rank of Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's forces. The Sháh of Persia, loath as he was to cut himself off from the influence of a brother whose military genius was of a piece with his statesman-like mind, had brought himself, in the interests of his southern dominions, to say good-bye to the Zillu's-Sultán, who would return at once to Isfahán, as Governor-General of Irak, Luristán, Isfahán, and Fars. And in this, the last rumour of all, there was a grain of truth, for it was not long before the Zillu's-Sultàn came back to us again, not as Governor-General of all the provinces aforesaid, it is true, but as the ruler of the self-same territory he had held prior to his visit. In fact, the outward and visible signs in him of his sovereign's favour were nothing more nor less than an added dignity of demeanour, and a more haughty bearing, and a new look of hope and confidence in the ultimate realisation of his heart's desire.

In the exuberance of this suckling hope it was, perhaps, that he spoke to me of Sir Mortimer Durand in words of unbounded admiration. The victories of Nadir Sháh, the Napoleon of the East, paled their ineffectual fires before the all-conquering spirit of her Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary; Feridun Sháh was not so just, nor was Sháh Abbás so liberal, as the Queen's representative in Teherán; and as for Rustum—bah! was he not a dwarf and a weakling in comparison with the tower of strength at the British Legation? Despite the hyperbolic enthusiasm of his partisanship, however, there can be no doubt that the Zillu's-Sultán loves nothing so much as a fine figure of a man: a stranger of thews and sinews is bound to find favour in his sight; but if the stranger should kick the beam in the scale of the Prince's expectation of mere bulk, it will be all over with him, unless he make amends for his humble stature by some startling novelty in dress. In dealing with this side of the Zillu's-Sultán's character, I might add another chapter to 'Sartor Resartus' without exhausting the reader's patience, but two episodes shall serve to point the trait in these pages. For instance:—

One afternoon—it was a post

day, I remember—I was walking across the flowery courtyard of the Diván Khané on my way to the schoolroom, when I heard the rasping metallic voice of the Zillu's-Sultán calling out to me from the other end of the compound. The sun shining in my eyes had prevented me from seeing him. Shading my eyes with my hand, I stopped dead, then doffed my cap of crocodile's leather, which had been the amazement of all beholders in Russia.

"Excellence," sang out the Zillu's-Sultán, "venez ici!"

I obeyed. The Prince was sitting beside the fountain on the daïs, surrounded as usual by a crowd of obsequious courtiers. Among them was the English-speaking *mirza* of the Imperial Bank of Persia, and he acted as my interpreter later on. The first thing his Highness did was to show me a sporting rifle, a beautiful weapon, which had just arrived from England.

"Who made this rifle?" he cried, holding it out at arm's-length.

I told the *mirza* that the name of the maker would be found on the barrel; after which the Zillu's-Sultán, who is nothing if not voluble in speech and restless in his actions, rushed to a bundle of papers that had come by post, and singled out a copy of 'Punch.' The cartoon was a native officer standing in a protecting attitude over the body of an English officer who was wounded.

"Anglais!" roared the Zillu's-Sultán in a derisive voice, dabbing a plump forefinger on the prostrate form. "Indien!" he yelled in a voice of triumph, caressing the stalwart outlines of the native officer with a lingering hand.

"Après?" I replied, not a little nettled.

The Zillu's-Sultán cast a furtive look in my direction. "Anglais bas!" he cried, as who should say, Praise be to Alláh, who is merciful and just to rid us of our enemies; then in a voice rising to a shout of thanksgiving, he caused me to burst from my reserve by yelling, "Indien haut!"

"Not a bit of it!" I cried, turning to the *mirza* at my elbow. "Tell his Highness that he misses the point. The 'Indien' is not, as he would have me believe, an Afridi victorious in the battle, but one of our native officers, ready and willing, if needs be, to sacrifice his life for his English comrade. Why, bless my soul, that picture is a tribute to the loyalty of our native officers, who, although they are fighting against their co-religionists, rush to the front when their English officers are shot down, and lead their men to victory over their friends—the enemy."

These words being interpreted to the Zillu's-Sultán, he burst into a roar of laughter, crying, "Do you think I didn't know that!" After which, his humour leading him to fresh fields and pastures new, he fell to making a digital examination of my cap and white riding breeches, of my snowy Norfolk jacket, and new, brown top-boots. The first and the last

achieved an easy conquest, and crowned my reputation for energy and tutorial wisdom.

"Pa - pa - pa - pa - *pa!*" he chuckled, in a tone of admiration too deep for words. "Très joli — très! portez toujours!" and thenceforward, until his passion for novelty overruled the fleeting impulse, I was doomed to take my walks abroad in top-boots and spurs; nor did I ever appear before him in a new suit of clothes but he would raise his too strident voice in commendation of what, in the recollection of his full-blown verbosity, I can only call the encyclopedian attainments of his tutor sahib. On such occasions, indeed, it could scarce be said of Solomon in all his wisdom that he was endowed like the spiritual father of the Zillu's-Sultán's sons.

The second episode is even more characteristic of the trait which shows the Zill to be at heart but the oldest child of the House of Kajar, and that episode I will now proceed to relate.

Upon the visit of the Governor of Shiraz and Fars to the Zill's court, Bahram Mirza said to me one morning—

"His Highness has requested me to tell you, monsieur, that the Governor of Shiraz will examine us this afternoon at the third hour before sunset, and his Highness would be much pleased if you would honour his Excellency by wearing your best suit of clothes—your very best, monsieur, something black and severe; something new and fashionable, monsieur; such a suit, for instance, as you would wear in the afternoon in England upon the occasion of a ceremonious visit."

When I had reached the Armenian and European colony of Julfá, where I was then in residence, and had changed my clothes, I drove back to the Palace of Forty Pillars *viâ* the desert and the byways, lest the passers-by should take fright at the hideous garb of civilised London "Town." My own East! land of the flowing *abba* and fascinating turban, be merciful to me, a transgressor against thy laws of good taste, in that I cast the shadow of a top hat 'mid the haunts of thy brooding spirit! As my fate would have it, I chanced to meet a European on the road, and he, opening his eyes wide to the blatant horror of my headgear, burst into a fit of laughter. I apologised, meekly enough, for the enormity of my sin, and drove on my way, dejected. But when the Zillu's-Sultán entered the class-room, and his observant eyes took in every detail in the amazing transformation, I knew at a glance that I had no need to apologise to him. Even before he had seen the hat, which I had concealed under my chair, his beaming face, casting its smiles round about me, said as plain as a whisper in my ear, "Mashalláh, behold a man of genius!" This tribute to my appearance, glorious as it might be, was far from crowning my triumph. It fell short of the full bloom of admiration by the gloss on my silk hat. Nor was

it until he had discovered the whereabouts of the heinous thing that his voiceless surrender to my overmastering gifts grew articulate from sheer adulation. Rising to his feet, he shed about my ears the flowers of Persian rhetoric, approaching at every compliment one step nearer to his victim. I should blush even now if I were to raise the veil from the manifold attributes of greatness that his Highness was pleased to discern beneath the surface of my frock-coat. It will be enough to say that they were of such sort as to win from him the assurance that his gratitude, deep as it was, sought in vain an adequate token of his appreciation. He would prostrate himself in the dust or ever I should go unrewarded, and would take the first opportunity of asking his Majesty the King of kings to confer upon me the order of the Lion and the Sun. Then was the West glorified? Alas! no, gentle reader! It was written in the Book of Fate that the East should rise triumphant in the end. At the height of my outraged modesty, the Zillu's-Sultán, happening to catch sight of my glittering watch-guard, made a clutch at it, crying—

"*Zar-i-khális ast?*" (Is it pure gold?)

"I do not know," I replied; "it was given to me by Feridun Mirza."

"Then all I can say is that it is not gold!" and so saying the Zillu's-Sultán turned on his heel and paced, slow and solemn, to the door. Never should the Order of the Lion and the Sun glisten on the breast of so deceitful a servant! So much at least was plain from the reproachful glance he cast upon me from the threshold.

And now to hark back to the Zill's political career. You will find it always well, in considering the ebb and flow of British influence in Persia, to make your minds clear as to the diplomatic aims of Russia in the beginning, and to remember that if Great Britain's star is under an eclipse the star of Russia must necessarily be in the ascendant. There is yet another and a greater lesson for you to lay to heart. Whereas the Russian policy is to hasten the decadence of Persia, and to penetrate by easy stages to the Persian Gulf, our salvation rather lies both in preserving where we can the territorial integrity of the country and in developing its resources. Already the whole of Northern Persia, which includes the provinces of Azerbaijan, Gilan, Mazanderan, and Khorasan, lies at the mercy of the ice-bound Colossus, who can thus afford to be either patient or aggressive as may suit his purpose best. For the same reason Russia is in a position, while wreathing her interference with a smile of mock ingenuousness, to put a fence to our diplomatic advances, as was proved quite recently when the loan was in progress of negotiation. That the Imperial Bank of Persia, a purely British enterprise, should hold as security for the loan the control of

the Persian customs at Bushire and Kermanshah was construed by the Russian Minister at Teherán into an encroachment upon the sovereign rights of the Sháh. Though the wily Minister knew that the Sháh's revenue from that source would double itself under honest management and the revised tariff, he was not the less certain that the Sháh, dreading a like demand from Russia in the north, would be quick to discern the threat underlying his words. The result was that the bank was reluctantly compelled to recall their representatives from Kermanshah and Bushire. Since the collapse of the Tobacco Régie, British diplomacy in Persia had suffered no more humiliating a defeat. Therefore, unless we are prepared to put an end to Russian encroachments by war, it behoves us to stamp the sincerity of our goodwill towards Persia with the hall-mark of generosity in our proffers of assistance; for nothing is more calculated to promote the aims of Russia than our being too grasping when we come to the settling of securities.

Our best security should lie in the success of our policy. The only policy we should pursue is the only policy we can pursue with success and self-respect. To maintain inviolate the southern and central dominions of the Sháh should be the end-all of our aims. To that purpose we should teach the Persians of those regions to put forth their whole strength, and never were they so strong and so prosperous as when the Zillu's-Sultán had the power to hold in check the turbulent tribes of the western provinces. Whatever destiny befall the north of Persia, I have undeniable authority for maintaining that no hostile political influence should be tolerated south of a line drawn across the country from Seistan on the east, *viâ* Kerman and Yezd, to Isfahan in the centre, and prolonged westward to Burujird, Hamadan, and Kermanshah. Now the districts of which the Zillu's-Sultán was actually the all but sovereign ruler in 1886 were Gulpaigan and Khonsar, Joshagan, Irak, Isfahán, Fars, Yezd, Arabistan, Luristan, Kurdistan, Kangavar, Nihavend, Kamareh, Burujird, Kermanshah, Asadabad, and Kezzaz, and all these provinces are within the above-mentioned boundary of our sphere of influence. I would ask the British Government if they regard the political influence of Prince Dabija, who was appointed the first Russian Consul of Isfahán at the close of the year 1897, as friendly to the interests which Persia and Great Britain have in common, and if they consider that those interests were best served, in face of the new political factor, by withdrawing Mr Preece for a period of close upon two years from his consular duties in Isfahán, in order that he might lend his assistance to her Majesty's Legation at Teherán? While I grant that the experience and tact of Mr J. R. Preece could not but strengthen the hand of the British Minister, I beg permission to call in

question the tact and wisdom of leaving open to the unquestionable intrigues of a powerful rival the culminating point of the British sphere of influence. Prince Dabija is in Isfahán for no other purpose than to undermine our prestige. He might scour the province from end to end, and would find not a single Russian whose interests it would pay his Government to protect. In the days of the Zillu's-Sultán's power, believe me, Prince Dabija would be now where he was—prior to the year 1897—at Tabriz. The Zill's downfall was Russia's opportunity, and she is making the most of her chances. It will go hard with us to escape the expenses of that Consulate of hers! Yet no sooner was it about to be opened than we scuttled from the field, leaving a busy Armenian doctor to safeguard our interests!

I was at the Zillu's-Sultán's Court from the beginning of July 1897 to November 3, 1898, and during those sixteen months the British Consulate was what Staffordshire folk would call void—a word which might well be applied to the head that hatched so addled an egg of generalship. It is not my intention to labour this point, but it is only right for the British public to know that, for the space of a year, the foremost political factor in the heart of our sphere of interest was the Russian Consul, Prince Dabija, and well he knew it too! From the day of his arrival he took up his abode, not in the Christian colony of Julfá, but in the Mohammedan stronghold of Isfahán; nor did he stay, despite the wordy clamour of the *mullás*, to weigh the pros and cons of flying his country's flag. All he did was to wait until a certain *mullá* was in the middle of his midday prayer outside the Russian Consulate: then he ordered his Cossacks to hoist the flag with as much ado as might be, that the truculent priest might know that there was no question but that he had come to stay. You will call this proof of masterfulness a mere straw, perhaps. Well, so do not I: but even if it were, straws the merest show which way the wind blows; and whether it blows from the Caspian Sea, or whether it blows from the Persian Gulf, is of moment to us in learning the direction of the giddy weathercock of public opinion in Persia. The proof of the Russian influence lies in the treatment that Russian subjects receive. Blessed is the European who has a Russian servant, for he might pluck with impunity even the truculent *mullás* of Kom by their beards, following the example of the Zill, who had been ever wont to treat the priests of Islám with cool and refreshing contempt.

If the late Mr Greaves, who was barbarously done to death while in the service of his country, had been protected by half-a-dozen Cossacks, he might have slept as peacefully in his tent as in a Russian fortress. If Mr Gentleman, after his attack of smallpox, had engaged a Russian subject as his road-servant, he would not have been robbed of his kit on his

journey from Bushire to Shiraz. If the Rev. Mr Garland had been accompanied by a Russian body-servant on his lonely walk from the Isfahán bank-house to the Jewish Ghetto of Djubareh in that city, he would not have been insulted by the street urchins, much less would he have been mobbed and spat upon and hustled into the presence of Hajji Sheikh Mohammed Ali over the sacred threshold of his mosque. I might multiply the instances; but the three already mentioned, occurring as they did in the British sphere of influence, go to prove all too plainly that our prestige in Persia is languishing from the want of a little blood and iron in the constitution of our imperial policy. These three instances alone clamour for a more active sway over the powers that rough-hew our ends. Such misadventures never happen to Russian subjects in the north, nor did they befall British subjects in the south when the Zillu's-Sultán was armed to the teeth against them. They should have the effect of a charge of electricity on our free-and-easy diplomatic corps in Persia, and on our Government at home they should have the effect of a summons to arms. The men of Fars, tired of snoozing, these ten years past, in the cradle of their race, would reach out a warm hand of welcome to the friendly nation that should teach them to be themselves once more. They yearn, as did their ancestors of old, to bequeath to their descendants the stuff whereof history is made. To that end the drill-sergeant and the engineer are wanting. The Zillu's-Sultán came the drill-sergeant over them to good purpose at one time. Unless we look alert the drill-sergeant of the Continent will be on the ground before us, and British prestige will be one with the ruins of Persepolis.

But I am strong in the hope that the policy framed by our present Viceroy of India, in the days when he was sowing his seed broadcast over the face of the East, shall yet be the active policy of our Government at Westminster, when they shall have scattered their chaff to the four winds of heaven. And when that day comes, I hope they will bear in mind that there rules, as Governor-General of Isfahán, a Persian Imperial Prince who proved at the height of his power that a virile spirit, making for progress and freedom, informs the character of the men of the south. That we raised not a diplomatic forefinger to support this Prince in the hour of our danger and his need, but allowed him to be stripped of his power to farm our sphere of influence, "with the cordial consent, if not at the actual suggestion, of Russia," is a blot on the scutcheon of our Persian policy which it is not too late to wipe out yet. Persia gained nothing by the Zillu's-Sultán's downfall, nor did we. Our acquiescence was vain, shifty, purblind. It was a throwing up of our hands at the dictation of Russia; it was a surrender of our rights to protect our best friend; and a repudiation, frank

and unabashed, of our duties towards our closest allies, the Persians of the southern and central provinces. If the Zillu's-Sultán had been a traitor, he would not have submitted himself to his father's will. If he had been a weak ruler, he would not have been allowed to retain the governorship of Isfahán. And if Persia has gained even the smallest advantage from his downfall, how is it that the sphere of his influence is the best-ruled territory in Persia? No, no; it were wiser to acknowledge a blunder which has been the means of hastening the aims of Russia, than to insist upon the infallibility of our judgment. I won't deny that the Zillu's-Sultán has many blots on *his* scutcheon—probably I know his shortcomings better than any European living—but he was always a strong man at the helm, and has gained immeasurably in prudence during the last fifteen years. All the features of his face make for determination and governing ability. The haughty brows, the broad, square forehead, the firm mouth, the combative jowl, the unyielding chin, and the long fleshy nose: all these are of a piece with the stubborn back of the man, which looks as if it had never been bowed in a *salám*. Only the eyes of him tell, perhaps, a somewhat different story: shrewd, astute, calculating, they are the index of a mind whose first impulse it is to distrust the appearance of truth and fidelity in human nature; they are suspicious, apt to imagine subterfuge in the frank, and selfishness in the disinterested; they show him to be quick to discern the mean and contemptible, and slow, very slow, to pin his faith in the (seemingly) upright and trustworthy: in a word, he is a keen judge of bad character, and would tell you that it is wiser to deny than to believe, since all men are liars under the Persian sun. On the other hand, he can be true to such friends as have proved their loyalty, and knows well how to bind them to his soul with hooks of steel.

But have we stood the test of his good faith? If he were the governor of a northern province, Russia would know both how to use his energies and how to check his impetuosity. In his 'prentice years he made his father a present of a great and efficient army; if that army is neither great nor efficient now, whose is the blame? Given the opportunity, there is no saying what the Zillu's-Sultán might not achieve in his maturity if our Government would only realise that his interests jump with ours, and ours with those of the central Government; and if his Majesty the Sháh would turn a deaf ear to such political intriguers as would fain call in suspicion the allegiance of his brother, who is only too eager to work heart and soul for the welfare of his country and his king.

WILFRID SPARROY.

THE WAR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.—IX.

BY A MILITARY CONTRIBUTOR.

THE COST OF RAPIDITY—A SNEAKING FOE—SWEEPING CHARGES—WOMAN'S WORK—DOCTORS DISGUISED—SETTLING DOWN IN PRETORIA—A TIGHTENING COIL—CAPTURE OF BETHLEHEM.

THE feature of the strategy that was initiated by Lord Roberts had been rapidity; and to rapidity were due the smashing blows dealt at Paardeberg, Bloemfontein, and Pretoria. The unexpected had happened, to find the Boers unprepared to meet them. But rapidity, though demoralising for the moment, is costly, and requires time for rest and recovery as it travels: the movement of men and cattle depends on flesh and muscle — it cannot go on for ever; the strain of incessant marching on insufficient food and forage will find out the weak spot even in the most willing. General French started on his memorable ride with 4800 horses, of which 990 dropped by the way, though the loss in the ranks, exclusive of Paardeberg, was only fifty men,—the brunt of the battle for life lay with the horses. But not for long. The men with worn-out boots, tattered clothes, hurrying through scorching days and frosty nights, with half a biscuit and water tainted with dead Boers, to satisfy an appetite and thirst compelled by hard work at an altitude of 4000 feet, who marched in as soldiers, proud of the victory they had won, staggered and fell out, victims to the curse that creeps in, unnoticed, wherever camps are crowded—enteric.

In England we had watched that ride, to wonder at its audacity and applaud the genius of the man who risked so much and gained his end with so little loss; and it was not till recent disclosures told of Bloemfontein and the hospitals there that men awoke to ponder with something of dumb horror on the deaths our soldiers had to face. Bullets they had faced — well! they were paid to face them—but typhoid, that was woman's work, to tend in the sick ward with cooling draughts, gentle hands, and words of hope that we shall recover—most of us; and for our soldiers in South Africa it would be the same. Of all things on which we prided ourselves was the care and the money we had lavished to provide comforts for our sick soldiers. The foremost surgeons of the day had volunteered; military hospitals had been arranged on the latest plan; private benevolence had provided as many more; ladies of every rank in life had gone out to nurse: the soldiers, at all events, would be looked after. Letters from the front had come

from patients to say how well they had been treated. Mr Treves at the Reform Club made a speech eulogising the perfection of the hospitals in Natal, and Sir W. MacCormac spoke of the medical arrangements as admirable—our minds rested content.

All this was so long ago as the 10th March, but what happened in March, for all we knew, was happening in May. Then Mr Burdett-Coutts told us that hundreds of men were lying in the worst stages of typhoid, with only a blanket to cover them, a thin waterproof sheet (not even that for many) between them and the ground; no milk and hardly any medicines; without beds, stretchers, or mattresses; without pillows, without linen of any kind, without a single nurse amongst them, with a few private soldiers as orderlies, and only three doctors to attend on 350 patients; their faces covered with flies in black clusters, the men too weak to brush them off, trying in vain to dislodge them by painful twitching of the features—there was no one to do it for them. And this a mile from Bloemfontein, where the army had been for six weeks. It is true that a terrible epidemic had followed it from Paardeberg, to break out when it halted. Lord Roberts tells us that before he left on May 3rd the sick gradually increased to 2000, reaching on June 4th the appalling number, in Bloemfontein, of over 5000 suffering from typhoid alone. Such were the bare facts as stated on either side—a sudden and devastating epidemic with totally inadequate hospital arrangements to meet it; out of which undoubted facts the question narrows itself into, Was the epidemic foreseen and provided for? Were the nurses and trained attendants in sufficient number? if not, why were they not provided in time? Abundance of medical stores had been landed at Cape Town; were no means found to bring them into the service of the patients?

Attempts have been made to saddle the responsibility of failure on Lord Roberts, who thought of the exigencies of his strategy to the exclusion of all else—on Lord Kitchener, who stinted the A.M.D. in transport—on the medical administration at the base—and on the executive medical officers. To take them in order.

First, Lord Roberts, as Commander-in-Chief, was accompanied by departments, each in charge of a staff specially selected for their ability in that particular line: to ask him to superintend each department himself was to ask an impossibility. Supreme action was with him to be assisted in details by officers whom he or the War Office had chosen; so any charge against him must fail so long as the responsibility of subordinate departments exists. In two matters only can the most acidulated critic find fault with his action: it certainly would have been wiser to have detached a larger force to guard the waterworks, knowing the inadequacy of the water-supply

at Bloemfontein and the number of troops it was intended to quarter there for a considerable time,—after the capture of the waterworks the death-rate went up to 370 as compared with 90 in the earlier stages of the campaign; and it should have been possible to commandeer every private house in the town till our sick lay under cover. It was a case where the feelings of the inhabitants need not have been consulted: every one of them had actively or passively taken up arms against us, and supported Mr Steyn when the Volksraad declared war. There were three large hotels and a number of most comfortable private houses which were not occupied by their owners, who had left; these houses had grounds round them in which tents for the attendants might have been placed. Mr Burdett-Coutts says many were occupied by staff officers; sick soldiers might have exchanged with them, or with comfortable burghers who had had a hand in their distress, that thin waterproof sheet and the mud in a bell-tent. But those were the days when leniency was abroad, when a Boer's word was trusted, and when rusty shooting-irons, surrendered, were saluted with much complacency.

Second, Lord Kitchener in charge of the transport had the most difficult task to fulfil. His Chief's scheme could not proceed unless the swollen-out carriage of the army was reduced sufficiently to carry it forward; to cut it down was an absolute necessity—all must suffer; if any man's transport was reduced to an impossibility, it was open to him to bring out the fact,—a determined and a tactful man would do so, or perish in the attempt.

Third, The medical administration at the base. It is admitted that stores, medicines, and comforts had been landed in abundance. Medical officers were urged by the War Office to ask for anything they might require in addition to the material at their disposal; there was no case of stinting, of careless stinting no case. The Ordnance had given all that had been asked for, and the Treasury had never suggested that we should be otherwise than lavish in the most extreme limits of generosity in all stores needed for the welfare of our sick and wounded. On the 15th June 853 medical officers, with 335 qualified nurses, were available; in the matter of *personnel* and stores the hospitals seem to have been amply equipped. But "the epidemic came on us so suddenly that we could not cope with it." Yet typhoid has always been the scourge of armies in the field,—in South Africa the water-supply, invariably surface drainage fouled by dead animals, is proverbial —that at least was known. The medical authorities on the spot were repeatedly warned by local medical men that from February onwards ten men would be down with typhoid for one with wounds. Ladysmith is in evidence of the persistent presence of typhoid—

every one who has visited South Africa bears witness to the same—it can hardly be urged that an outbreak was unreasonable to expect; yet when it did occur it seems to have been taken by the medical administration at the base as an unwarrantable intrusion.

A Canadian sent home says, "The field hospitals were awful places. We were not nursed by women; we were attended by orderlies, many of whom were dirty and unprincipled"; and Sir W. Foster believes that half the sick soldiers might have been saved if they had been nursed under healthier and proper conditions. The horrors were due to some fault of administration; with such an army in the field the outbreak of disease ought to have been foreseen and provided for. The officers of the A.M.D. freely admit that they do not know what they could have done without the aid of private hospitals.

"They arrived here," says Dr Conan Doyle, "just at the very moment when the sickness was becoming alarming, and they took their share of the strain when the epidemic was at its height — they were more compact and mobile, and got to work almost at once after their arrival. Without these hospitals, fitted up by private effort and manned by volunteers, it is difficult to see how the epidemic could have been met."

The want of female nurses was terribly felt. Sir W. Foster says the evils of much that occurred at Bloemfontein was owing to the absence of a proper female nursing staff; hundreds of them might have been there by the end of April. The nurses of three extemporised hospitals were all there; the women of the town population were there going about their normal occupations,—at least they were sufficiently trained to sweep those black clusters of flies off the poor fellows' faces. And as to transport from the base, if correspondents and a host of loafers could find accommodation, it could have been found for nurses to soften the last hours of those poor tormented soldiers. No doubt the presence of untrained and hysterical women should be discountenanced, the ladies to whom Mr Treves referred, while the help of every woman with the smallest disposition for at least elementary nursing should be eagerly accepted. The very fact of a woman's presence close by the sick soldier's bed, to listen to, to feel her touch, to ask for a drink of water, to talk of home and of the time when he will be on the way there once more, is to that poor patient life and hope — all that is sweet and gentle, where just now it was hard and cruel. But women put human sympathy before red tape, which is the soul of all departments. That the administrative ability of the A.M.D. is not equal to its medical skill was whispered after the relief of Ladysmith. At the hospital at Imtombi robbery is stated to have taken place on an enormous scale; which, if exaggerated, still points to a want of administrative power, a lack of organisation, and of inelasticity strongly suspicious of red tape. There

is some truth in what a Colonial says, writing from Maritzburg: "The senior officers of the department, with a few exceptions, are so taken up with their own importance as combatant officers and their rank as colonels and majors, that they leave much to be desired."

Fourth, But there are men serving in the "contemned medical service," as Sir W. MacCormac goes out of the way to call it, against whom no word is spoken,—the men on the battlefield, regardless of themselves, girt about with noble unselfishness, who shed down hope and comfort on the wounded, curled in their agony, lying out upon the veldt, left behind when the others fight on, to bleed, and shrink, and die — forgotten. Whose hands are those that come to soothe their pain and tend them? Dare I say the word? — the doctors; it must be colonels now. "Ah!" cry the sufferers, "it was the colonel, he fought well; but it was the doctor saved my life" — those quiet, gentle-handed men who did not mind the bullets or quick death. No trumpets theirs, no gallant charge that broke his ranks to be wired home and cheered in every town,— just their simple duty, grandly brave. All honour to our noble soldier-doctors, though we call them colonels now.

. . . . . .

Pretoria was occupied on the 5th June; but further progress was impossible, as had happened at Bloemfontein, owing to the condition of the horses, which, after the strain of their rapid march, required a rest. So the army settled down in comparative comfort for a time, during which the administration of the town under a new set of officials was undertaken. The original town council temporarily resumed its duties; an English burgomaster was appointed; a new court of justice called the Pretoria High Court established; Colonel Maxse placed at the head of the police; the Provost-Marshal's staff largely increased, and a great number of Colonials, Australians and Canadians, taken on for civil employ. Recognising the fact that in dealing with the Boers the terms "honour" and "truth" must be largely discounted, the oath of neutrality was made much more stringent, and a proclamation issued that damage to the railway or telegraph would be visited on the nearest farms by way of fine, the principal residents to be made prisoners of war. The publishing of false and malicious reports was forbidden, under pain of heavy penalties. These precautions had to be taken as the town was full of spies, who, in connection with the enemy, gave out ridiculous rumours to the populace,—that Botha intended to attack the town in force, when he would receive assistance from a large number of burghers inside who had already given in their submission.

The Boer women continued to show their bitter feelings towards the soldiers, flaunting

the Transvaal colours before them, and, specially, making insulting remarks to the officers. But the market reopened and was fairly well supplied; the banks were allowed to do a limited business; a Gazette was started, to acquaint the people with the real movements of the British and the dwindling resistance of the Boers. Shopping was freely indulged in as the more peaceably inclined inhabitants settled down to business, completely resigned to the new conditions. Meantime General Hunter had pushed eastward from Christiana, meeting with slight opposition, the towns of Zeerust, Lichtenburg, Klerksdorp, and Potchefstroom surrendering, as he advanced, with large numbers of rifles, till on the 22nd inst. his advance-guard reached Johannesburg. Here he assumed temporary command of General Ian Hamilton's column, and marched to Heidelberg, continuing on south to Frankfort in the Orange Colony; closing in on his left towards General Clery's division at Vlakfontein, which was itself in connection with General Buller at Standerton, — thus interposing a force between Botha at Middleburg and De Wet in the Orange Colony. To complete the closing in of the latter, General Smith-Dorrien was at Vredefort, west of the railway; at least three divisions continuing the line south to Bloemfontein; Generals Rundle and Brabant stretching across east from Winburg to Ficksburg, thus completing the circle; with one outlet only across the Drakensberg range into Natal, where General Lyttelton was waiting.

The fighting force with De Wet was said to be from 10,000 to 15,000 men,—probably an exaggeration,—who, the same report said, were heartily sick of the war, and watched every opportunity to escape to their farms; the only obstacle being Mr Steyn and his sjambok. Botha had retired farther east, to Merwe or Bronkhorst Spruit, contenting himself with awaiting developments in the Orange Colony, and with occasional sniping in the hills round Pretoria. Mr Kruger, in his railway-carriage at Machadodorp, still defiant, starting off a message through a London paper to the world that the South African Republic would fight for its independence until 500 burghers remained alive, and, even then, he would continue to fight.

But the prolonged inactivity of our troops at Pretoria offered the Boers a favourable chance to imitate De Wet's tactics in the Orange Colony. A commencement was made on the 6th July by Erasmus, with 3000 men, six guns, and two Vickers-Maxims, who moved round our right flank to threaten the railway south. The mounted infantry under Hutton were sent off to reinforce Mahon, who was in the vicinity of Springs, with orders to drive the Boers east of Bronkhorst Spruit, which was effectually done after two days' fighting. At the same time an attack was made on Rustenburg, which was summoned to surrender by a commando under Limmer, who, on

a refusal, opened fire with his artillery and tried to take the heights commanding the town—the 7th Hussars, after a rapid march from Zeerust of forty-eight miles, being just in time to assist in beating off the Boers. But the most determined attempt was made on the 11th instant, when three separate attacks were delivered: on Krugersdorp, when it was beaten off with much loss; at Derdepoort, north of Pretoria, when a commando under Grobler surprised and drove back a squadron of the 7th Dragoon Guards on advance duty from the camp near Doornpoort. The scouts were here induced by a white flag to ride up to a body of men in khaki, whom they thought belonged to the 14th Hussars, when volleys were fired into them at 100 yards, only a few escaping to camp to warn the regiment, which advanced with two guns, and succeeded in checking the Boers till, the action becoming general along the whole line, owing to the heavy fighting farther west, they retired on the main line.

The attack westward was made by Delarey on a party consisting of a squadron of the Scots Greys, two R.H.A. guns, and five companies of the 2nd Lincolnshire regiment, which had been sent to Nitral's Nek, where the road to Rustenburg crosses the Crocodile river,—their duty to keep the road and telegraph open between that place and Pretoria. They arrived in the afternoon, when three companies with the guns and the squadron took up a position in the pass, where they camped; the remaining companies being left in the plain some distance off. At daybreak the pickets on a kopje north of the camp fired some shots just as the Boers appeared on the rocky hill east of it and at once opened a heavy fire, throwing the camp into confusion. The colonel was wounded, the horses with the guns were shot, and the infantry, under what cover they could, kept the enemy at bay throughout the day; the Boers gradually working round their flanks till they were nearly surrounded, still bravely fighting; but as night fell ammunition began to give out, when some 90 men, all that remained, with the two guns, forming the advance force, surrendered.

Will our officers never discover that they are still in an enemy's country, with an unbeaten foe all around them, beaten only when the whirlpool which the masses under Lord Roberts created has been powerful enough to suck in everything that came within its influence—smaller bodies, outside the vortex, still intact, strong in their knowledge of the country, and desperate, as men who fight for everything that makes life dear to them, who know that British rule means an end to corruption, underhand dealings, and slavery for the Kaffir—better fight it out now than exist hereafter where "slimness" means roguery.

The Lincolns reached a convenient spot, and proceeded to make themselves comfortable for the night; pickets were posted on a hill to the north,

but the country east does not seem to have been explored. To encamp, with guns, in a hollow, in rocky inaccessible hills, cannot be wise; pickets on them, no matter how many or how vigilant, can be of small use except to cause the men to stand up and be shot; the camping-out of guns and cavalry close to cover which they cannot surmount at a moment's notice, or up which an enemy can creep unseen, is distinctly forbidden. In manœuvres a sheltered spot is comfortable; in war, comfort must give way to safety.

But these waspish attacks on the north and west of the line demanded such incessant vigilance from our outposts, and were magnified amongst the burghers into so many British defeats, that it was necessary to clear them out of the passes and thorn-country from which they issued. So a considerable force, mostly mounted, pushed out from Pretoria at daybreak on the 10th inst., moving on a wide front through the various passes—General French closing up the right flank with an infantry division. On the appearance of our troops the Boers everywhere hastily retreated without firing a shot, in so great a hurry that those holding the railway left without their camp-equipment, which fell into our hands. At Kameldrift they attempted to stand, opening with artillery on General French, who was advancing against their front till General Ian Hamilton, working round from the west, put them to flight without their having obtained a reply to their own fire. The presence of General French with a division, and General Pole-Carew with another in touch with him farther east, had the effect of separating the force under Botha from that under Delarey, which could now only rejoin the former by making a long detour.

De Wet's movements were still veiled in the utmost mystery; columns, large or small, appeared at points the most unexpected, to attempt, and in some cases to carry out, a cleverly conceived and daringly executed raid, only to disappear as quickly into the "fog of war": his mobility never slackened, and was only met by the most unceasing watchfulness of our troops. But any attacks were half-hearted, and showed that the pressure was beginning to tell. Intimation of this was first given when 800 men of the Derbyshire and Imperial Yeomanry regiments, until lately prisoners at Vrede, were put across the Natal border, without their officers, by De Wet: the burghers with him had found they had not food enough for themselves, and these additional mouths to feed meant starvation for themselves. They were turned adrift at Olivier's Hoek Pass without a scrap of food, all of them tattered and torn, in the rags the Boers had provided in place of the uniforms they had stolen; and in a state of semi-starvation, utterly worn out with forced marching, up and down,

with De Wet's force to prevent their recapture.

General Paget, with his brigade and a battery of Field Artillery, had occupied Lindley since 5th June, holding eleven miles of defensive line, which was repeatedly attacked, several times with artillery—De Wet on the 20th inst. bringing five pieces to bear; the attack being resisted successfully by the 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry, a battery C.I.V. coming up during the day to add greatly to the Boer repulse. On the 1st July General Clements joined hands with him, having moved up a flying column from Winburg, when the combined forces made an attack on Beacon Kop, which, after several nearly hand-to-hand fights, was captured from the Boers, who had held it all along as commanding the Bethlehem road. A series of well-contested actions followed; General Paget driving De Wet from position to position towards Bethlehem, to bivouac on the 5th inst. fifteen miles north-west of that town, in touch with General Clements; Mr Steyn leaving at midnight the previous day, with 3000 men, for Fouriesburg, half-way to Ficksburg. On the 6th inst. General Clements moved his column towards Bethlehem, and on nearing it sent in a flag of truce demanding surrender, which was refused. The country round was broken and difficult, making a turning movement by the mounted infantry impossible; but General Paget managed to take an important position, commanding the town, with the 1st Munster Fusiliers and 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry; General Clements the following day attacking a second position, which was taken with great gallantry by the 1st Royal Irish,—the fight lasting till noon, when the town surrendered. The enemy then streamed out in full retreat, leaving, among the spoil, one of our own guns which they had captured at Stormberg.

Next day several of Mr Steyn's principal Ministers surrendered at Heilbron; and farther south the Boers evacuated the hills east of Senekal, which they had always held as barring the road to Bethlehem, and which gave them a base from which to cover their retirement from Winburg. The capture of Bethlehem was important, as the last town which Mr Steyn could proclaim as the seat of his government, with, perhaps, the exception of Fouriesburg, to which he had retreated in the hope to prolong his political existence, helped by the rugged country in which it is situate. More important still was the possession of the railway, ninety miles from Ladysmith, across the Drakensberg, and giving connection by rail with Durban, 300 miles south.

DISTRACTED CHINA.

II.

In the concluding paragraph of our last article on "Distracted China" we expressed our belief that the best hope for the empire rested in the action of the viceroys of the central and southern provinces. Later events have proved the truth of this forecast. Chang Chih-tung and Liu K'uni have not only stood firm in the support of law and order, but have induced others to follow their example, with the result that, while the northern and north-eastern provinces have been in a ferment of revolution, the districts on the Yang-tsze and south of it have enjoyed comparative peace. But the consequences of their firmness have led to more than this implies. The success of the movement in Peking depended on the attitude of the great Satraps on the Yang-tsze Kiang; and when the failure of complete victory in the neighbourhood of the capital became apparent, the opposition of the southern viceroys gave the Dowager-Empress and her allies pause. They saw that the empire as a whole was not with them, and misgivings arose in their minds as to their power to fulfil their empty boast to drive the foreigners into the sea. In their blind ignorance they had thought that this was an easy task, and the Empress even went the length of issuing an edict in which she commanded the provincial authorities at once to crush all foreigners who might be found on the sacred soil of China.

But a rude awakening was in store for her. She saw that 2000 Europeans were able to make a stand against 20,000 drilled troops and Boxers; that a handful of foreigners occupying the Legations were able, at least for a time, to hold their own against the assaults of countless hordes who fought under her banner; and that a small garrison at Tientsin was successfully opposing a native army vastly superior in point of numbers. These facts were convincing and potent enough to emphasise the cleavage which already existed between the Empress's particular clique and the moderate party headed by Prince Ching and Jung-lu.

With an astuteness which savours of worldly wisdom these two leaders of opinion stood, it is reported, prominently forward on the side of the besieged foreigners, and it is even said that the Empress herself used her efforts in the interests of peace. To this end the influences of which we have spoken have largely contributed. But there is yet another cause which has exercised an effect in this direction. The Ministers representing China abroad have impressed on their Imperial mistress the horror with which the barbari-

ties perpetrated and threatened at Peking have been received throughout the whole civilised world, and they have warned her that the retribution exacted for such deeds will be in proportion to their atrocity. By the light of these warnings she has learnt to recognise that Prince Tuan and Tung Fuhsiang have laid up for themselves and their followers a store of vengeance which promises to be overwhelming. In these circumstances she has thought it wise to "hedge"; but when the time for the final settlement arrives, it must not be forgotten that the origin of the outbreak was entirely due to her initiative, and that until the last few days she directed the movement against foreigners with all her accustomed bitterness. We have it on the authority of Sir R. Hart, that some time before the final massacre she entered Peking at the head of 8000 troops, and "in a towering rage ordered all foreigners to be cleared out the same night." The edict also in which she instructed the provincial Viceroys to show a determined opposition to foreigners, and in which she conferred on them the extraordinary power of declaring war on their own account, with the State papers in which she directed the same authorities to show every leniency to the Boxers, who were at that moment engaged in an anti-foreign crusade, furnish quite sufficient evidence to satisfy any Old Bailey jury of her complicity in the plot of assassination, while her more recent orders that foreigners are to be crushed out clearly convict her of directly inciting to murder.

It has too often been our habit in dealing with the Chinese to forget the crimes committed by them on the first appearance of repentance. The instinct is a generous one; but it has in the past been the means of leading us into renewed difficulties, and in this particular case would be fatal to the maintenance of peaceful relations with the empire. The sudden change of front on the part of the Empress, even if true, is no sort of evidence that she is conscious of the error of her ways, but is merely the act of a would-be murderer who, seeing a policeman approach, pretends to help up his intended victim from the ground. The leopard can as easily change his spots as that mischievous old lady can reverse the convictions of a lifetime. To permit her restoration to power would be only to prepare for ourselves another time of anxiety and trouble so soon as she may consider the forces at her command to be equal to the renewal of the struggle.

The attitude of Prince Ching and Jung-lu is not open to the same animadversions. Though by no means pro-foreign in their ideas, they are yet men who are open to conviction. They have seen how the prestige of the dynasty has declined in consequence of the Japanese war and the events which followed it, and they are astute enough to know that it is only by the adoption of reasonable and well-considered reforms that the em-

pire can recover its position in the eyes of the world. They would be the first to dissent from many of the crude reforms advocated by K'ang Yu-wei, but are fully prepared to walk on the safer road by which the empire may be led to a position of security and strength. As president of the Tsungli Yamên Prince Ching, while by no means showing himself particularly friendly to Europeans, was always courteous and open to reason. The experience thus gained would make him a valuable adviser in all matters of state, and he might, in conjunction with his two great viceroys Chang and Liu, form a cabinet which would be strong enough to steer the imperial galley through the troubled waters which are now threatening its existence.

There are those who see no other course open for the restoration of peace than the overthrow of the dynasty in favour of a Chinese line of sovereigns. But no one who has read Chinese history and is cognisant of the awful massacres which have accompanied changes of dynasty in China could contemplate such a revolution without horror. Years of disorder and disquiet must necessarily follow so violent a change, and such a convulsion of society would furnish no certain guarantee that a wiser and better *régime* would follow. Chinese dynasties have shown themselves to be quite as corrupt and as hostile to reform as the present people in power, and a period of violence and bloodshed is a bad prelude to a new order of things. It is better to mend than to end the existing system, and that there are materials at hand with which to patch up the Government and restore order in the country has already been shown.

At the present moment complete anarchy exists at Peking, and the real administration of the empire rests with the provincial authorities. It is generally admitted that the first object of the European Powers should be to restore law and order, and the next "to safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire." These ends can be more surely attained by making use of the materials at hand than by encouraging a political convulsion which must necessarily for a time introduce chaos into the administration. Our interests in China are entirely commercial, in common with those of the United States, Germany, and Japan; and it must obviously be the desire of these nations, with ourselves, therefore, to restore order to the empire with as little delay as possible. Mr Hay has explained to the United States representatives abroad that "the purpose of the President is, as it has been heretofore, to act concurrently with the other Powers—(1) In opening up communication with Peking and rescuing the American missionaries and other Americans who are in danger; (2) in affording all possible protection everywhere in China to American life and property;

(3) in guarding and protecting all legitimate American interests; and (4) in aiding to prevent the spread of disorder in other provinces and the recurrence of such disasters. It is of course," he adds, "too early to forecast the means for attaining the last result; but the policy of the United States is to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace in China, preserve China as a territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly Powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard to the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese empire." These are the principles which should guide the action of the Treaty Powers, and they represent in fact the policy of the open door, which has long been announced to be the main object of British diplomacy in China. To all those nations which have commercial interests in that country the preservation of China as a territorial and administrative entity is of supreme importance. Experience has abundantly shown that wherever those aggressive Powers, Russia and France, have established a footing for themselves, they have persistently and rigorously excluded the commerce of other nations from their acquired territories. The transfer of a province, therefore, to either of these Powers means the loss of it as an open market to the rest of the world. To be told in such a case that there would remain a right of reprisal to ourselves affords no compensation for the loss of trade in the dissevered territory; and we should be false to our hereditary policy, as well as to our immediate interests, if we did not lend all our weight to the political programme described by Mr Hay.

We agree with that statesman that it is too early to forecast the means for securing the prevention of the "spread of disorders and the recurrence of such disasters as we have lately witnessed"; and certainly the explanations which the Chinese have been good enough to make during the last few days in no way help us to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion on these points. The Chinese Minister at Washington recently presented to Mr Hay the copy of an official telegram from Peking disclaiming all responsibility on the part of the Chinese Government for the Boxer movement, and asserting that the Treaty Powers brought the outbreak to an acute and dangerous stage by their action in bombarding the Taku forts. This veracious document further states that the movement began with the formation of a society composed of rebellious subjects who practised boxing and fencing, and at the same time gave a spiritualistic air to the fantastic rites which they adopted. But it entirely forgets to mention that it was by command of the Dowager-Empress and in the name of the Emperor that a decree was issued direct-

ing the provincial authorities to draw a wide distinction between the Boxers and revolutionary societies, and to give these first a free hand in drilling their men and in organising their forces. That the movement spread with astonishing rapidity is probably the only truthful statement in the telegram, and is susceptible of a very plain explanation. The imperial sanction given to the movement was quite enough to account for the extraordinary success which attended its operations. But what the telegram does not mention is that the Boxers whom the Empress delighted to honour employed their rapidly filling ranks in murdering Christian converts and destroying mission premises. "Every one looked on the movement as supernatural and strange," says the telegram, and this was undoubtedly the case so far as concerns the ignorant and superstitious people, who are ever ready to acknowledge superhuman powers in all impostors who have sufficient impudence to pose as possessing them. In this way the most incredible rumours spread as to the mystic powers of the Boxers, who aroused the terror and anger of their credulous countrymen by roundly asserting that the foreigners were responsible for the absence of rain, and that, to add to their iniquity, they were busily engaged in poisoning the village wells with the object of destroying the people. It was after this that, according to the Peking telegram, disturbances broke out and attacks were made on Christians, in course of which churches were burned and converts were killed. A more correct version of the case would be that, under the ægis of the Government, the Boxers as their forces increased simply carried out on a more extended scale the programme with which they had started. On their march northward into Chihli they murdered and robbed Christians precisely as they had learnt to do in Shantung, the province where they originated, and the only supplemental departure from their original scheme was the destruction of the railways and the attacks on foreigners in general. With a convenient lapse of memory, the writers of the telegram entirely omit to make reference to the meeting held at Peking on May 20, at which the foreign diplomatists discussed the situation created by the Boxers, and decided that, unless the Chinese Government showed more vigour in bringing the existing state of disorder to an end, it would be necessary to send for escorts of their countrymen. This decision was only arrived at after every form of expostulation had been dinned into the ears of the Tsungli Yamên without producing the slightest effect. No notice having again been taken of this final protest, the guards were provided on May 28.

In the copy of the telegram presented to Mr Hay the writers claim credit for having allowed the foreign escorts to enter the capital, whereas, as is well

known, the authorities threw every obstacle in the way of their transport to Peking, and it was only after repeated demands that the men were eventually admitted within the walls of the capital. The Chinese Government has further the insolence to assert that the escorts not only protected the Legations but patrolled the streets, and that repeated reports were brought in of persons having been hit by stray bullets. This conduct, we are asked to believe, so outraged the feelings of the people that the lawless among them took advantage of the situation to burn and kill. This is the official gloss put upon the fact that, owing to the support given to the Boxers by the Government, they daily became bolder in their aggressions both within and without the capital.

It is noticeable that throughout the whole imbroglio the foreign representatives at Peking, on their part, showed every disposition to take a favourable view of the action of the Tsungli Yamên. But matters had now reached a point when it was no longer possible to exchange compliments with the Government. On the 6th June instructions were telegraphed from Downing Street to Admiral Seymour and Sir Claude Macdonald, giving them full discretion to act as occasion demanded. To so acute a pass had matters arrived, that not a moment was lost in taking advantage of this discretionary power. On the 9th of June Admiral Seymour, at the head of a mixed force composed of a British naval brigade and troops of the Treaty Powers, marched towards Peking. The result of the expedition is well known. The 2000 men with Seymour were faced by a force of upwards of 20,000—composed not only of the Boxers, but of native troops, armed with the latest weapons and carefully drilled by European instructors. Unprepared for such a coalition, Admiral Seymour found it impossible to approach Peking, and, after having marched about halfway to that capital, he was compelled to retrace his steps. In the course of this expedition he fought seven pitched battles, and succeeded in making good his retreat with but a trifling loss.

With the failure of this attempt ended all hope of successfully relieving the Legations until the end of August, when a sufficiently large force for the undertaking would have been assembled at Tientsin, and when, the rains being over, the country would have again become practicable for military operations. Meanwhile, however, the supreme crime was committed, and the outrage for which there can be no pardon was consummated. On the night of the 6th of July the British Legation, whither all the foreigners in Peking had betaken themselves, was fiercely bombarded, and as the sun rose the hordes of Boxers and soldiers rushed through the breach in the wall made by

their guns. But the fight was not quite over yet. The few survivors stood shoulder to shoulder facing their countless enemies, and fought until the last man was cut down. It is some slight consolation to know that "these few, these happy few," inflicted severe loss on their murderers before they sank in death. In face of this atrocity, it is difficult to write calmly of the penalty which should be inflicted on the perpetrators. It is but common justice that the instigators of the enormity should be held personally responsible for it, and among these stand prominently forward the Dowager-Empress, Prince Tuan, and General Tung Fuhsiang. But the nation should bear its share, and, in addition to an ample money penalty, some lasting testimony should be given of the horror which the crime has evoked. If the walls of Peking in which the people trusted were levelled with the ground, and their foundations sown with salt, it would teach future generations that such dastardly deeds cannot be committed without bringing down on their authors just and crowning retribution.

Looking back on the events which have led up to the present untoward condition of affairs, it is impossible not to recognise that certain provocatives which have conduced to it might, by careful forethought, have been avoided. There has been much heedless talk about the breaking up of China and the partition of the empire. All this is well known to the educated section of the people, and native maps have been published and circulated among these by political agitators, showing the portions to which the different nations of Europe propose to lay claim when the scramble shall begin. This land-hunger among the Powers has produced a marked effect on the people, and the unfortunate title of Lord Charles Beresford's book, which has been translated into Chinese and is current in the provinces, supplies an additional handle to the fomenters of anti-foreign feeling in the country. The seizure of Kiaochow and Port Arthur, with our own encroachment at Wei-hai-wei, came to the political mischief-makers as convenient object-lessons of what was destined to happen if some decided check were not put on the aggressions of the "foreign devils." The course pursued by the Emperor Kwang-hsü under the influence of K'ang Yuwei was considered by the Empress and her friends as being more likely to encourage than to defeat these grasping intentions. Then followed the *coup d'état*, when we missed the opportunity which was then given us of declaring authoritatively in favour of progress and freedom. Our treaties had been concluded with the Emperor, and with him alone, so long as he was on the throne, therefore, were we concerned to deal. His virtual deposition by the Dowager-Empress was an act of violence against which we had

every right to protest. But instead of doing this we at once acknowledged the rule of the usurper, and so completely accepted her as the *de facto* sovereign that at their own request the ladies of the European Legations were introduced into her presence with every regard to the strictest court ceremonial. In this matter the British Legation, representing as it does the bulk of foreign trade with China, should have taken the lead, and it is impossible not to suppose that the confiding course pursued by Sir Claude Macdonald was dictated from Downing Street. If, at the time of the change, a strong hand had pursued a definite line of policy, the machinations of the Empress and her advisers, which have been directly responsible for the present condition of affairs, might readily have been defeated. A very general spirit of reform is abroad in the central and southern provinces of the empire, and the maintenance of the Emperor on the throne would have been welcomed throughout the country as a guarantee that measures calculated to advance and strengthen the empire would be carried out. If, then, we had taken a strong line on that occasion, we should have had with us all the intellectual and progressive sections of the people. But we did nothing, and the result has been that we have thrown the whole weight of political power into the hands of the anti-foreign party, with results which we now have good reason to deplore.

THEIR SIXTH SESSION.

It is as yet uncertain whether the session now about to close will be the last of the present Parliament or not. But we shall not speculate at any length on the probable date of the dissolution. There is no special reason for dissolving Parliament this summer; and, in default of such, the Government might be exposed to imputations which, however groundless, it is perhaps better to avoid. There are some, perhaps, who may think that they could well afford to despise them; and certainly if to appeal to the people at the present moment is to take a mean advantage of Lord Roberts's successes, it is an advantage which we do not believe any Liberal Government would have hesitated to take. To waive the odds in their favour which the South African campaign affords may be, in the judgment of some keen partisans, misplaced magnanimity. On the whole, however, we are inclined to think that it may be the wiser course, after all, to show no signs of precipitation. The Ministerial majority at the next general election ought not to depend on the accidents of war, but on the confidence which the country entertains in the general policy of the party. We see no reason why they should not stand as well with the public six or eight months hence as they do now. They can hardly stand better, we admit; and there is, we must remember, many a slip between the cup and the lip. But, barring unforeseen events, we need not allow ourselves to doubt of a favourable issue should a dissolution be deferred to next year. And there is always this to be considered—that a majority based on the calm judgment of the nation, when the enthusiasm excited by the war has had time to cool down, and the verdict is due to a permanent sense of the services rendered to the country by the Unionist party during the last fifteen years, will be more valuable and possess greater elements of stability than a victory won only by reference to a particular achievement, however brilliant or glorious. A Unionist majority returned by the country this summer might, of course, be the result of both. But we could not be so sure of it, nor, what is equally important, would foreign Powers be so sure of it, as if the effervescence occasioned by the war had been allowed to settle down. Lord Palmerston dissolved on a somewhat similar occasion in 1857, and obtained a large majority. In 1858 he was out of office.

If Ministers decline to seize the present opportunity, we must suppose that they have good reason for the delay, and place every confidence in their discretion. Certainly if they postpone the appeal to public

opinion, it is not because they have any reason to be afraid of it. Under all the anxieties and responsibilities of the South African war, which, after an arduous and costly struggle, has been brought to a successful termination, domestic legislation has flowed on in a quiet and beneficent stream, bringing increased comforts and securities to the labouring poor, extending the scope and improving the machinery of education, checking commercial dishonesty, and making additional provision for the benefit of agricultural tenants. Besides these purely domestic reforms, we have in the passing of the Australian Commonwealth Bill a practical demonstration of the generous confidence with which England is prepared to treat all her colonial dependencies who show equal confidence in herself, and an encouragement to our Dutch subjects in South Africa to accept their future not only with equanimity but with cheerfulness. If Government had only the legislative record of the present session to depend upon, they need not, we repeat, shrink from a dissolution.

The four most important domestic measures of the session are the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Housing of the Working Classes Act, the Agricultural Holdings Act, and the new Education Code, debated in the House of Commons on the 3rd of May. The three first of these, at all events, to say nothing of some minor measures besides, are a sufficient answer to that class of calumniators who, too stupid to invent plausible accusations, have to take refuge in barefaced falsehoods. Party men of this calibre have been fond of asserting that Government either deliberately went to war to distract attention from the poverty of their social programme, or else have been so overwhelmed with South African affairs as to be incapable of paying due attention to domestic ones. The British tenant-farmer, the agricultural labourer, the artisan, the mechanic, and the best friends of elementary education, know better.

Of course none of these Acts are perfect. As circumstances change, as old grievances are remedied and new necessities are recognised, amending Acts and extending Acts will periodically be called for, and it is only impracticable theorists who ask that perfection shall be reached at a single bound, and assert that no measure can be deserving of support which leaves any one demand unsatisfied. To do one thing at a time has always been the principle of the Conservative Government, and the consequence is that the number of social and popular improvements which they have succeeded in effecting is out of all proportion to what the Liberal record has to show.

The Housing of the Working Classes Bill, introduced by Mr Chaplin on the 22nd of February, confers on local authorities the power to establish or acquire lodging-houses outside the boundaries of the district which they administer. The

object of the measure is very simple: it is to relieve the congested districts in our large towns; and an Act of Parliament enabling workmen who are earning good wages to live outside will necessarily create more room and cheaper accommodation for those who remain behind. It likewise empowers rural authorities to acquire land for cottages, thus supplying a deficiency which is, or was, among those most loudly complained of by the English agricultural labourer. Yet because the bill does not do a great many other things at the same time, which lie quite outside the scope of it, we are told by the Radicals that it does nothing! Sir W. Foster was aggrieved because the land attached to such new cottages as may be erected by the rural authorities is not to exceed half an acre. But this is ample for a cottage-garden. And the bill was not one intended for the creation of a new class of small holdings, which are already provided for. Mr Robson insisted on the local authorities being invested with facilities for enforcing adequate railway communication between the outside dwelling-houses and the labourer's place of work. But these powers already exist, and thus it is that the time of Parliament is wasted. The truth is, that the Liberal and Radical party have felt for some time that by the long series of domestic reforms carried by Lord Salisbury's first and second Administration the ground is being cut from under them; and this is the secret of the desperate attempts they make to thwart or discredit all the measures supported by the Unionist party for the amelioration of the working classes.

The Workman's Compensation Act Extension Bill was not introduced by a member of the Government; but the Government made it their own, and with their support it was read a third time in the House of Commons on the 27th of June, and in the House of Lords on the 16th of July. The pith and marrow of the bill is the inclusion of agricultural labourers among the class of workmen who are entitled to compensation for injuries received in the course of their employment. The point in the bill which gave rise to the keenest discussion is the restriction of liability for compensation to those employers who habitually employ one agricultural labourer or more than one—the emphatic word in the clause being the word "habitually." An English agricultural labourer in regular work and in the receipt of good wages will occasionally employ another man to do something for him on his allotment or in his cottage-garden, and it would have been absurd, as Sir Charles Dilke admitted, to make such employers as these liable under the Act. The bill is intended for the protection of the regular agricultural labourer in the service of employers who can afford to pay compensation such as the class not included in the bill would find utterly impossible.

The Agricultural Holdings Bill was read a second time in the House of Commons on the

9th of April; and, after reference to a Standing Committee, was read a third time on the 12th of July. Some discussion arose among the Scottish members as to the propriety of legislating for England and Scotland in one and the same bill. It was pointed out, however, by the Lord Advocate that, for the purposes of this particular bill, the relations between landlord and tenant were exactly the same in both countries; and that the legal terms employed were not such as any judge could misunderstand. The general scope of the bill is to extend the liberties and securities which have already been so largely conferred upon the agricultural tenantry. It is simply inevitable that a measure of this kind should be assailed at once both by those who think it goes too far and by those who think it does not go far enough. At the moment of our going to press the bill had not been fully considered in the House of Lords, where some alterations of it, in the interest both of landlord and tenant, may probably be expected. But in whatever form it emerges from the ordeal, it is a measure of which the tenantry of Great Britain will not be slow to recognise the value.

The bills relating to English, Scottish, and Irish legislation were so backward at the time of our going to press that we pass on at once to the new Education Code,—a most valuable reform in the system of elementary education, which was explained by the Duke of Devonshire on the 23rd of March, and gave rise to an instructive debate in the House of Commons on the 3rd of May. The fundamental principle of the change is the substitution of general efficiency for special excellence as the test by which the Government grant is to be determined. There will now be a higher grant of 22s. per child and a lower one of 21s., and the inspector is to decide to which of them any given school is entitled. In doing so he is to pay special attention to four points: (1) The suitability of the instruction given to the circumstances of the scholars and the neighbourhood; (2) the thoroughness and the intelligence with which the instruction is given; (3) the sufficiency and suitability of the staff; (4) the discipline and organisation. Under the existing system children are crammed in such subjects as are likely to produce the highest grant, which is a variable amount, without regard to what is best for the children themselves and their future prospects in life. The salient merits of the new system were summed up by Professor Jebb as follows:—

"The grant to a school would henceforth depend on the inspector's report as to the educational value and intelligence of the work done in the school as a whole. The second great merit of the block grant was that it gave more freedom and elasticity in the choice of subjects to be taught. The curriculum in each school could be adapted to the particular circumstances and needs of the children. In rural schools, for instance, children could be taught such things as were likely to awaken their minds, to interest them, and to be useful to them

in their after-lives. So, again, in town schools, under all the varying conditions of particular localities, everywhere the teaching could be adapted to the real educational interests of the taught. That also was an immense gain. There was a third merit which belonged to the block grant. It was fixed at 22s. as the normal amount. That gave new stability to the income of a school, and managers of schools would be able to plan their work with a sense of financial security which they had not before possessed."

We are quite sure that the value of this change cannot be overrated; nor has the Board of Education been unmindful of the position in which some elementary schools might have been placed had the Code stood by itself. Schools which have been teaching higher subjects and earning grants of 25s. or 27s. would of course have been losers, and the higher education would have suffered in proportion had nothing been done to satisfy its demands. But the Department has now decided on recognising a higher elementary school, not, as Professor Jebb was careful to explain, a lower secondary school. The Minute has nothing to do with Secondary Education; "it crowns our system of Primary Education." And in these higher grade elementary schools the grant will be regulated on a higher scale. Professor Jebb explained the difference between Scotch and English schools, and showed the worthlessness of any comparison between the grants allotted to them:—

"It was a fallacy to compare the new higher grade school created by the new Minute with the Scotch higher grade school. The Scotch school was at once a higher primary school and a special type of secondary school, in which pupils could stay up to the age of eighteen. The fallacy of comparing it with the English higher grade school arose no doubt from the fact that it was under a School Board, it being forgotten that the Scotch School Board was not, like the English, concerned only with primary education."

We have dwelt at some length on the education question, because we believe the New Code to be the most really valuable piece of work which the Government has exhibited this session. It will, if we mistake not, exercise a very beneficial influence on the character of the rising generation of working men, and save them from falling under the dominion of those superficial pedants who are never able to understand the difference between knowledge and education. Knowledge speedily acquired may as speedily be forgotten. But the effect of education, if properly conducted, is never effaced, and this depends on its being given through channels in which the pupils are thoroughly interested, and by teachers who can awaken their sympathies. Education given with regard to the circumstances of the children and the neighbourhood in which they live is being constantly refreshed by all that comes under their daily observation after they leave school. This is the really fertilising system; these are the "permanent improvements" in the human mind, which deserve far greater consideration than a few showy attainments, creating only a

sham and shallow equality between the education of different classes in society, such as Radicals consider to be an achievement of which democracy should be proud. Elementary Education is meant for the benefit of the children of the labouring classes as a whole, with regard to the social conditions which must be the lot of nine-tenths of them, and not to supply a machinery by which a few precocious intellects may be forced, and exhibited like prize geraniums.

There are many other measures of great public importance to which attention might be called if they pointed the same moral, or if it were the object of this article to supply a history of the session. Measures which are due to exceptional emergencies, and such as are of limited operation, we have not included in our survey, which it was our object to confine to the ordinary course of domestic legislation and to such measures as affect the whole labouring population of Great Britain. But we must make an exception in favour of the Australian Commonwealth Bill, marking, as it does, an epoch in the history of the British Empire; and we may take this opportunity of congratulating the British public, the Australian people, and Lord Hopetoun himself on his appointment as the first Viceroy. His personal qualities and his knowledge of the country augur well for the new career on which the colony has now started.

We might perhaps have said nothing about the Irish Tithe Rent Charge Bill, had it not been for the scene which took place in the House of Commons on the third reading (July 16). Mr Asquith then seized the opportunity of delivering a violent attack upon the Government—rightly described by Mr Balfour as an electioneering speech—a great part of which was wholly irrelevant to the bill before the House. By way of getting up the steam before the dissolution of Parliament, he raised the old cuckoo cry of class legislation, declaring that the whole domestic policy of Government had been a policy of doles, of which this Irish Tithe Bill had been the most flagrant instance. But what *is* "a class," and what *is* "a dole"? We should think that tenant-farmers are a class just as much as landlords: and in that case the Land Acts of Mr Gladstone have been gigantic examples of class legislation. If the reduction of any public burden falling on the owner of land is a dole, then again the lowering of interest on the annuities payable by Irish landlords in 1885 was just as much a dole, and just as much an encroachment on the assets of the Irish Church, as the present bill, or more so. Yet Mr Gladstone and the whole Liberal and Radical party supported that reduction. This sudden attack upon a body of men who during the last thirty years have been the victims of legislation which, as Mr Balfour very truly says, "has no parallel in the legislation of any civilised country," is not without considerable significance. The proposal to make the Irish

Tithe Rent Charge correspond with the variations in judicial rents is so manifestly just and reasonable, and so conformable to the nature and history of tithe, that it is superfluous to defend it. As for revoking agreements, what is an agreement of thirty years' standing compared with the agreements torn up wholesale in 1870? and as for class legislation, this is simply inevitable in highly developed and complex forms of society. Such terms as "the public," "the community at large," are only convenient generalities, which are often very misleading. The public is made up of classes, and in the press of social progress sometimes one of them and sometimes another will find itself injured or neglected. To right such wrongs as these and readjust the social balance, is one of the first duties of Government. But legislation devised for such a purpose must of necessity be "class legislation."

The question which it is natural to ask at the end of every parliamentary session is one of special and exceptional interest at the present moment. Stand parties where they did? or has any approach been made since this time last year towards healing the schism in the ranks of the Liberal party, and restoring that essential organ of parliamentary government, an effective Opposition? The answer to this question must be an unhesitating negative. On the very threshold of it we are confronted by two great facts: a powerful and united Ministerial party, to which no effective opposition is possible except by an equally united Liberal party; and on the other hand a Liberal party divided into two apparently irreconcilable sections, numerically weak, even should their ranks be closed, and impotent until they are. The heterogeneous groups of which the present Opposition consists have no common ground on which they can appeal to the people, and no one leader whose claims on their respect and obedience they all recognise, in whose name they can fight, and who is calculated to inspire both confidence and enthusiasm in the masses. Under these conditions, which appear likely to remain stationary, a general election can scarcely alter in any material degree the relative strength of parties. That men who go to the country a mere mob, like sheep without a shepherd, and appeal to the electors on contradictory principles, should return from it a disciplined, well-organised party, leaving all discordant elements behind them, and presenting an unbroken front to their political opponents, would be a transformation little short of a miracle; and one section of the Liberal or Radical party seems to be perfectly aware of it. These are they who profess to look for salvation to the construction of a new party on the basis of "Liberal Imperialism" — that is to say, Conservative on all Imperial questions, and Radical or revolutionary on all domestic ones. Is such a combination possible? We doubt it.

A body styling itself the "Imperial Liberal Council," and speaking, we must presume, in the name of Lord Rosebery, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, and other Liberal statesmen of a similar way of thinking, issued on the 6th of last month "a statement of policy," which clearly shows that their principals are quite prepared to throw over the party represented by Mr John Morley and, we suppose we may add, Sir William Harcourt. They likewise openly declare that they have finally broken with the Irish Nationalists, though this perhaps is a little doubtful. But it is quite clear that if we detach from the whole Liberal party both Home Rulers and Little Englanders, together with all the minor groups who usually act with them, the residuum can only be a mere nucleus, round which in course of time a party may possibly grow up, but which can exert little or no influence on public affairs at present. Should the attempt here spoken of be continued, and attain any measure of success, we may live to see the trial of a very interesting experiment—how far, namely, it is possible for Imperialism abroad to coalesce with Radicalism at home: a question which has never yet in the history of the world been answered in the affirmative. To the Government of a great empire certain qualities and principles are essential to which Radicalism is repugnant. The masculine temperament, the stern moral fibre, the calm unimpulsive judgment, conscious that empires can neither be formed nor kept without some sacrifices, from which the weaker nature recoils; the recognition of the principle of authority, and the inflexible resolution to enforce it; the statesmanlike glance looking across the immediate present, unaffected by the accidents of the moment or the clamours of the multitude: these qualities are not the virtues of democracy, nor are these principles its passport to our confidence.

At the close of the nineteenth century the British people seem to feel no need for the formation of any such party as the new manifesto shadows forth; and we have only to read some of the speeches recently delivered by the leaders on both sides, and then glance at the parliamentary history of the last few years, to see the reason why. As we have already had occasion to remark, no institution, no legislation, no form of government is perfect. But in the Unionist party as now existing the nation feels that it has got as good an instrument for the satisfaction of all its wants as can reasonably be expected, and that if it went farther it might probably fare worse. The Government have made mistakes. But are Liberal Governments infallible? With the Unionists in power social reform and political stability go hand in hand, an arrangement to which Liberalism does not so readily lend itself. And supposing, for the sake of argument—what is not true—that reform is in any

appreciable degree retarded by this alliance, the people on the whole, whatever a few faddists may desire, find ample compensation in the comparative freedom from agitation which is thus ensured them.

Unionism, said Mr Balfour, in his speech of May 16, is no longer a temporary makeshift to meet a temporary necessity. Such may possibly have been its origin. But, in that case, as has often happened in history, accident brought about a consummation for which public opinion had long been ripe, and which only awaited some such stimulus as Home Rule, to burst through the environment behind which it had matured. Unionism has now become that *conglutinatio partium*, that fusion into one party of the moderate members of both, for which Cicero sighed, and which till recent years only the younger Pitt had ever succeeded in effecting. The country understands this. It is conscious that the strength of the Unionist party consists in the recognition of popular needs, combined with respect for established and long-tried institutions, which are the two main articles in the creed of the British people. It is further to be added that, in spite of the Imperial Liberal Council, Mr Balfour, Mr Chamberlain, and the Duke of Devonshire all seem equally doubtful whether English Liberalism and Irish Separatism have really parted company for ever. It would perhaps be more correct to say that, like two suspicious characters, they have come to the conclusion that, for the present at least, they had better not be seen together. That a secret understanding may be kept up between them all the same is not only possible but probable, and that for the very reason above given —namely, that when the day of battle again comes round, they will be found necessary to each other. Mr Asquith's speech, to which we have already referred, looks very much as if the right hon. gentleman had this truth before his eyes.

Both the Duke of Devonshire and Mr Chamberlain spoke to the same effect on the consolidation of the Unionist party. We have at length what has often been demanded, a truly national party. But there is still another reason why the British people are not likely to reverse the verdict of 1895. In a speech delivered on the 19th of last June, the Duke of Devonshire, who is not the kind of man to trouble himself about a political opponent without good reason, referred to the language of the Opposition in terms which we do most earnestly hope that the people of this country will not be allowed to forget during the interval that may elapse between the prorogation and the dissolution of Parliament. Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman claims great credit for the "patriotic attitude" of the Opposition towards the war in South Africa. How did he show his patriotism? By doing all he could before the war broke out to encourage the Boers and discountenance

military preparations on our own part. He was blind altogether, wilfully or not we cannot say, to the great South African conspiracy, and if he had been in power would have taken no measures for counteracting it. We have this under his own hand and seal, so to speak: for the explanation of his own words, which the Duke of Devonshire quoted, amounted simply to a repetition of the original assertion in different terms. If you are charged with saying that black is white, and declare the accusation false because you said that white was black, you hardly better your position with minds of common-sense and common honesty. Then, again, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman has pronounced the policy of the Government to be precipitate — meaning the proclamation by which we annexed the Orange River Colony, and the coming proclamation by which we shall shortly annex the Transvaal. "Why precipitate?" says the Duke of Devonshire. Was it not far better to speak out at once and let the whole world know what we were determined to carry out? The longer this was left in doubt, the more room would there be for the operations of intrigue and for misconceptions and delusions, both among foreign Powers and the Boers themselves. Great difficulties will arise in the ultimate settlement of the South African colonies. But the question with which the Duke of Devonshire concluded his speech is one which we hope every Englishman and Scotsman will continue to ask himself as the general election draws near: "Are those difficulties likely to be lessened if we take as our guides the statesmen or associates of statesmen who found salvation for Ireland in the abandonment of her Union with Great Britain, or who failed in the autumn of last year to see in the events which were then pending in South Africa any cause either for war or preparation for war?" This inquiry is sufficient by itself, without the other reasons we have given, for thinking that there is little fear of an anti-ministerial verdict when the country is appealed to. The party now in power is what the country has long been asking for, though with little hope at one time of seeing its aspirations realised. It can do all that is necessary for the welfare of the labouring classes, without threatening the rights of property or the security of national institutions: and, finally, it is the only party either able or willing to give effect to the Imperial policy which has now been unmistakably pronounced to be the policy of the British people.

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HOW WE ESCAPED FROM PRETORIA.

BY

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2ND BATT. GORDON HIGHLANDERS.

V.—ON THE VELDT.

ALL above seemed still and deserted, but lest we might be mistaken we listened intently for some minutes. Sergeant Brockie, who was deputed to reconnoitre the building, to make sure that no caretaker had been left in charge, now pushed up the trap-door, but despite the greatest care he was unable to prevent it from making a loud noise, which echoed in the deathlike stillness. Creeping into the room above, he made his way out through the doorway into the passage, and shortly returned to say that all was clear.

Le Mesurier and I followed, carefully shutting the trap-door after us. We were astonished to find how weak the confinement and cramped position had made us. Le Mesurier's legs gave way and he fell down, and all of us, when we tried to walk, reeled like drunken men. Several minutes passed before we dared leave the room, and it was not till we were some distance from Pretoria that our limbs regained their wonted strength.

Leaving the room which we had lived in and under for four months, we made our way to the backdoor which opens on the yard. It was locked, but the absence of a large pane of glass, which had been broken and completely removed, provided an easy exit. We now put on our boots, which we had been carrying, and passing

through this opening gained the verandah. Pausing for a moment to see that no one was in the yard, we crossed over to the low buildings on the other side. The moon was full, and the electric lights not being turned off we felt unpleasantly conspicuous.

We had intended to leave the yard by climbing over the iron paling into the next garden; but the moon was far too bright for this, and the windows of a house which looked on to the garden were open and some people were looking out. We therefore made our way to the railings, near which the police tents had been, and climbing over reached the street on the south side of the school. A couple happened to pass, just after we had got into the street, but they took no notice of us.

Crossing over the road, we went up the street which leads towards the fort guarding the southern entrance to Pretoria. I stopped to light my pipe, and Brockie donned a white sling in which to place an arm, and this pious fraud, supported by his wearing the Dutch colours round his hat, gave him the appearance of a wounded Boer. We next bore to our left, then to the right, and finally struck a road which we conjectured would cross the Delagoa Bay Railway.

So far, although we had passed a few special policemen, our appearance had seemed to attract no particular notice. In the Transvaal, as in many other parts of the world, the country bumpkin, when he honours his county town with a visit, puts off his workaday garments and comes in his Sunday best. Our garb could scarcely be said to come under the latter heading: we looked more like three moonlighters than anything else I can think of. Fortunately for us the town had been depleted of many of its inhabitants, most of whom were at the front, and in consequence the streets presented a very deserted appearance; and although we knew that the Dutchman is abominably inquisitive, yet we hoped to evade his notice. Le Mesurier and Brockie kept to the middle of the road. I followed them on the pathway, a little behind. In this fashion we were tramping along towards the outskirts of the town, with the villas in gardens on our right and left, when we met a special constable. This one, instead of passing us as the rest had done, stopped, and turning round scanned us with suspicion. I expected every minute that he would ask us in Dutch who we were and whither we were bound. But Brockie, having noticed that we were running the risk of being challenged, turned half round, exposing to view his quasi-wounded arm. This seemed to satisfy the guardian of the peace, for, though he turned up a side street and had another look, he ultimately moved off, unaware perhaps that

> "Them as is watched out of sight
> Bide away for many a night,"—

which proved to be the case. Perhaps he thought discretion the better part of valour, for we were three desperate men,

and he was alone, with no help near. Whatever may have been his motives, his action was fortunate for him so far as he was concerned, for we were prepared to go to any length to avoid a hue and cry.

We soon came to a level crossing over the Delagoa Bay Railway, and fortunately found no patrol at what seemed to us to be a likely spot for one to be met. Turning aside into some long grass, we sat down to decide whether we should follow road or railway. I had a small medicine-bottle full of whisky, presented by a fellow-prisoner as a parting gift. The occasion was not one to be overlooked, and we proceeded to drink success to our venture; then, having decided to take the railway as our guide, we set off again, and found we were clear of Pretoria and its suburbs.

I inwardly congratulated myself that now no officer or man who wore the Gordon tartan was a prisoner in the hands of the Boers. But we were not yet out of the wood.

Straight before us, high up in the eastern sky, shone the moon, dimming the brilliancy of the evening star which followed closely in her wake; to the right the Southern Cross, and low down in the north-west Orion's Belt. With guides like these, to lose ourselves would not be easy. Reaching the railway, we walked along in single file, halting now and then to make sure that all was clear in front. A coal-train from Balmoral, going westward, passed us, and soon after we had to throw ourselves down in a ditch beside the line to conceal ourselves from a Dutchman going home off bridge-guard,—for every bridge and every culvert from Pretoria to Komati Poort had its guard by day and night. These guards (we were afterwards told) had orders to fire on any one walking on the track at night.

When we had gone about three miles, and were covering the ground at a good rate, we almost walked into the arms of a sentry who was sitting on the parapet of a bridge which carried the railway over the road. We came upon him suddenly, as he was sitting partly hidden by a bush, and walked to within a few paces from him, and that he did not see us, unless he was asleep, is a miracle. We dropped like stones beside the rails, and softly crept back in the direction whence we came. Then along a muddy ditch, until we had lost sight of him, after which, making a wide detour, we regained the line at some distance beyond the bridge. Creeping through a mealie-field to avoid a Kaffir kraal, we passed along the face of a hill and found ourselves close to a telegraph-wire. This wire, we discovered later, ran like a Roman road over hill and dale to Komati Poort, and had we followed it we should have made our journey many miles shorter, and escaped the annoyance of losing our way in the dark. After following it

for a couple of miles we heard the sound of running water. Hastily making our way to it, for we were growing thirsty, we came upon a muddy stream evidently used for irrigating the fields on the hillside, down which it flowed.

Unfortunately at this juncture Le Mesurier, who had got off the path among some rocks, twisted his ankle. Painful as it was, to walk on, however slowly, was better than to rest, and so allow it to grow stiff. Pluckily recognising this, he kept moving forward, and we made some progress, though slow. We were now approaching the first station, thirteen miles from Pretoria, and decided to halt there till next evening. I felt a good deal disappointed at covering so short a distance the first night; but it was no one's fault, and it was as well, perhaps, not to walk too far at first, for we were not in the best of training just then.

Reaching Eerst Fabriken, our farther progress was barred by a ditch some fifteen feet deep, with just beyond it a sluggish muddy river. Hunting up and down the ditch, we at length found a spot where, hidden by the thick bushes, it gradually sloped up to the ground-level. The bottom was damp, but that was soon remedied by covering it over with straw, which we found lying about. We had, however, got into a veritable hotbed of mosquitoes, for they attacked us with the greatest fury, and to sleep was impossible. The arrival of morning and dispersal of these greedy bloodsuckers was a great relief. At 6.30 A.M. the steam-horn of the Hatherly Distillery hard by sounded, bidding the workmen rise for another day of toil. At this establishment, I am told, every variety of strong waters, from Hennessey's three-star brandy to Long John of Ben Nevis fame, can be procured. It is merely a matter of labels, and they are not so hard to copy as bank-notes. Our hiding-place proved to be admirable, for though it was uncomfortable, yet it was improbable that anything but a dog would find it, and we were well sheltered from the sun. This was the first day for nearly three weeks that we had seen the sun, and we were not sorry to be protected from his burning rays by the thick foliage. During the day we ate a little chocolate and some meat lozenges. Some one seemed to be fishing in the river close to us—an Englishman we thought, for he whistled, one after another, many tunes that were familiar to us. Except for the occasional song of a Kaffir, the noise of cows busily cropping the grass, and the buzzing of many insects, all else was silent. The ubiquitous fly had of course marked us down, and did not spare us his objectionable attentions, and to drive him off by smoking was not considered safe. Even here, and indeed throughout all our travels, we never raised our voices above a whisper, lest some passer-by might hear and discover us. Our determination was if possible neither to see any

one nor to be seen by any one till we reached the frontier. This would free us from incriminating explanations, if any were demanded.

Time passes slowly when one has nothing to do all day but brush off flies, and we regretted that a pack of cards had not been included among our baggage, for then we might have called the "demon" to our aid. A few trains passed up and down; these and the occasional sound of the distillery horn alone served to break the monotony. At half-past four Sergeant Brockie was despatched to do a little scouting, in order to find out whether there was a drift over the river near where we lay hidden. After a short time he returned, bringing the satisfactory news that the ford lay between us and the station, and across it several waggons were outspanned.

When darkness at length came, we sallied forth from our retreat, crossed the river, then the railway, and reached the road. By the small scale map we possessed the railway appeared to make a considerable bend to the north-west, and as the road seemed to form the chord of the arc, it would be shorter to follow it. But Transvaal roads are not as other roads, and are as unlike their counterpart in England as a lane in Devonshire is unlike the turnpike to Bath. Looking at a map of the Transvaal, you are tempted to believe that once on the road, so clearly defined on paper, you have only to shut your eyes and go ahead. Try it, and you will find a close resemblance between yourself and the blind led by the blind. The highways in the South African Republic are innocent of metal—macadam is a name unknown: they consist of nothing but deeply indented wheel-tracks left by the clumsy, ponderous transport of the country—the ox-waggon. As a Dutchman in wet weather leaves the main track where it has become swampy and marks out a line for himself, the natural consequence is that in time the vicinity of a road becomes a maze of tracks, and to find your way in the dark and in an unknown district is nigh impossible.

To-night we were to experience this. Sergeant Brockie, who posed as a fairly good "pathfinder," took the lead, and we pushed boldly along; for our lame comrade was a little better, and had secured a bough as a walking-stick. We noticed that the track we were following went due south, but thought that doubtless it would soon change its course. Not long after we had crossed the railway we came upon a large white wooden gate. Passing through it, we found we were on an avenue, both sides of which were lined with firs,—a most unusual luxury for a Dutchman; for the Boers have done almost nothing for their country in the way of wood-growing, and except for a few trees round a farmstead, you may travel miles without seeing a leaf or finding shade. Soon we came to four cross-roads, but we were beginning to lose faith in our conductor, and we turned north-east. We

must have diverged considerably, for it seemed a long time ere we again met the railway, and both my companions were getting tired. Before us lay a range of hills in which was a *poort*, or gap, through which the railway passed. As we drew nearer to the hills we heard the noise of rushing water, and once inside the *poort* we sat down by the river to refresh. The spot looked singularly picturesque. Road, railway, river—all were crowded together into the gap, which at its narrowest point was about two hundred yards wide; and on either side the hills rose steep and bare. The ground ascended before us towards the farther entrance of this defile, and the gradient of the railway was steep. One felt instinctively that this would be a bad place in which to encounter a patrol, for the only way out of it seemed forwards or backwards.

Brand's essence and whisky worked wonders, and, reinvigorated, we started off full of the intention of reaching Elands River station, twenty-nine miles from Pretoria. I led the way along the railway-line. On our left, a stone's-throw distant, flowed the river, its surface shining like a mirror under the rising moon. Before me ran the double rails, looking like bars of silver; and beyond them, on the right, the road. As we trod softly and looked ahead as far as one could distinctly see, some tents appeared on the right of the railway, pitched close under the hill; one of them seemed larger than the rest. I turned to Brockie, who followed me, and asked his opinion. "Only a Kaffir kraal," he replied, so on we pressed. A few paces farther, and the stillness of the night was broken by the angry barking of a dog. Immediate action was imperative. Down we dropped into the long rushy grass which filled the space betwixt the river and the railway. The dog continued barking—he had evidently seen us. Presently voices became audible, one of them bidding the cur be silent. But he did not cease, and another followed suit. After lying in the grass about twenty minutes, for we did not care to move so long as the dogs remained on the alert, we heard voices coming in our direction, and the barking of the dogs became more distinct. A whispered conference was held, and then we dragged ourselves like snakes diagonally back towards the river. Reaching a ditch, Le Mesurier, who was following me, came alongside and asked me if I had seen Brockie, who had been following him. I had not, so we waited a few moments; but seeing nothing of him, and the enemy drawing near, we crossed the obstacle, and found ourselves at the edge of the stream. Again we paused, this time for several minutes, and the searchers came in view, following our track.

The crisis had come: to stay where we were meant probably recapture. I whispered to Le Mesurier to follow me silently and not to splash. The next minute I was in the river,

which was out of my depth, and Le Mesurier dropped in beside me. Holding on to the roots of the reeds which lined the bank, we carefully pulled ourselves some distance downstream, and then paused. The searchers and their dogs were evidently now at fault, and showed no signs of coming our way, so we continued our downward course, and ultimately swam across and into a ditch on the other side.

We had been a good half-hour in the stream, which seemed to us intensely cold, and our teeth were chattering so that we could scarcely speak. My wrist-watch had stopped; but Le Mesurier's—a Waterbury—was still going, for it had been provided by his care with a waterproof case. We now crept along the ditch upstream again, and then turned off towards the hillside, which was dotted with large boulders. Coming round the corner of one of these, we found a tent in front of us, and not caring to pass it, we tried to climb up the steep face of the hill. Failing at one point, we found a kind of "chimney," up which we climbed, pulling and pushing each other till the top was gained. A few minutes' rest was necessary, for our clothes were heavy with water and the climb had made us breathless. Le Mesurier had done wonders with his ankle—the cold water had been most efficacious. Next we walked along the rocky face of the hill, parallel to the direction we had followed below, and gradually descended to the level and struck a path. Brockie was irretrievably lost, and it was useless to attempt to find him. He had with him a water-bottle and sufficient food, and knew both the Dutch and the Kaffir language. Following the path, we passed several clumps of bracken, one of which we selected as a suitable hiding-place. To have walked farther in our wet and clinging garments might have been wiser, but we decided that we had had sufficient excitement for one night without trying to add to it.

Carefully avoiding breaking down the fern, we took our way into the centre of the clump, and made ourselves as comfortable as was possible. I took as a prophylactic ten grains of quinine and four of opium, all that was not reduced to pulp by our recent immersion. I believe the dose of opium was a large one, but it did not make me sleep. The night was bitterly cold—for where we lay was nearly five thousand feet above the sea-level—and, soaked as we were, we shook and shivered. Of course the mosquitoes did not spare us, and we spent the remainder of the night in fighting this useless scourge.

When day broke I found I was so stiff and rheumatic that I could not move, and Le Mesurier was not much better. However, when the sun rose and penetrated our wooden bodies we soon found movement possible, and by noon we were dry and ready for any more adventures that might come. We had suffered some loss by that unavoidable dip

in the river. Le Mesurier had lost a pocket-book and I the contents of the whisky-bottle, the cork of which had come out when we were crawling along in the grass—by accident, not design. I had also lost a triangular file, a memento of the Model School. Further, our food-supply was water-logged, our tobacco spoilt, and likewise our matches. We managed to eat some pulpy chocolate, which was becoming nauseous to us, besides creating a thirst we had no means of quenching. We had trusted to finding plenty of mealies growing; but the harvest was just gathered in, and this source of supply was lacking.

Our hiding-place, although overlooked by the hills, was a good one. Only a few Dutchmen and Kaffirs passed by along the paths, and they saw no sign of us. The want of proximity to water was its greatest fault, and we mutually agreed that howsoever uncomfortable a swamp might be as a sleeping-place, it was the only place in which to pass a day under the broiling sun, unless a shady nook were forthcoming. Few trains passed, as it was Sunday. One could not help carrying one's thoughts back to Pretoria, and wondering where our accomplices would think we had reached, and what they would think we were doing. Only too well we knew, at any hour of the day, how they were passing their time, and how unhappy many of them were. How light-hearted we felt at being free again! All that was necessary for us now was care and caution, and these we had been accustomed to when below the floor, and we were now determined not to leave anything to chance, or to spare any trouble which might help to ensure our ultimate freedom.

In addition to the ordinary risks of being captured or shot, there were two others which now presented themselves. My fear was lest the trap-door, which we could not shut down very neatly, might have been noticed; and also that Sergeant Brockie should get ahead of us, reach Lorenço Marques, and, forgetting that we were still behind him, talk. That the latter supposition was not devoid of foundation will appear later on.

The hour had now come round when it was time to continue our journey. It was decided to leave the railway and use the moon as a guide till near dawn, when by turning north we could regain the railway with certainty. The distant roll of thunder and the lightning-flashes gave every sign of a coming storm. The moon was not yet up; but the flashes which from time to time shot forth from the inky clouds made the bare veldt look as bright as day, and we felt that we were very conspicuous. Using a compass, we pushed on till by the light of the moon we saw in front of us a Kaffir kraal, and found that we were walking past a field of water-melons. The opportunity was too good to be lost. Since we left our hiding-place we had had no water save that which a

shower had left in the hoof-marks of some cattle. We now sat down and simply gorged this thirst-quenching pulp. I have often eaten Afghan melons, which the caravans bring on their camels to Peshawur, and these more resembled them than any others that I have tasted. But we had been heard or scented, for the kraal dogs near by began to bark. I hastily tied up a melon in my handkerchief, and we walked silently away, and after crossing a stream which ran through a deep donga, and mounting a hog-backed hill, struck the railway.

We now foolishly left the line, and wandered far from our course. I think we must have gone round in circles, for we only reached Elands River station shortly before dawn. I was tired out, principally from having slept badly when below ground, and from not having slept at all since we left Pretoria, and was prepared to lie down on the veldt and take my chance of discovery; but better counsels prevailing, we made for a clump of trees which rose prominently before us on the sky-line. No river was to be seen, although the name of the place betokened one; there was nothing in a liquid form visible save a tiny trickling stream. This, however, is a little way of their own that South African rivers have—at one time a roaring torrent, at another a microscopic stream.

Nearing the trees, we walked into a barbed-wire fence, and crossing it, selected a small clump of gum-trees for our lair. These were only saplings, six to eight feet high, interspersed with larger trees of a kind unknown to me. Behind us we had left two alarming tracks in the dew-sodden grass—but the sun would soon rectify that. Throwing ourselves down, we endeavoured to get some sleep before the mosquitoes found us and made repose impossible. My melon made such an excellent pillow that I was soon in the land of Nod, but was startled when I woke at 7 to hear Le Mesurier whispering, "I think we are discovered!" I could get no more from him just then, so lay thinking what was to be done, and hoping that he was mistaken.

He told me afterwards that some one had passed close by, and, he thought, had seen us. A heavy shower of rain now fell, perhaps hiding our foot-prints in the grass. Two hours later the sound of advancing footsteps became audible. It was a young Dutchman coming along a path not six feet from where our heads lay on the ground. He stopped when he came opposite to us, and a dog which accompanied him growled. Visions of blood-thirsty vrouws arose in one's mind; for now there were few men on their farms, and it was said on all hands that the women were more than Spartan in their severity. The lad now began shouting what I supposed to be some Kaffir name. Receiving no reply, he moved off slowly in the direction whence he had come, still calling out. It seemed to us as if he must have seen us, and, not

daring himself to disturb the intruders, had gone for help. But it is marvellous how, if one remains absolutely still, one may pass unnoticed, and our imaginations here had led us astray. Nothing happened, no one came, and the incident only increased our confidence; for we felt that having had two such close shaves, we must eventually escape altogether.

All day long the Kaffirs worked near us, busy cutting wood and drawing water, and the Dutch lad passed more than once again. The Kaffir is more like an animal than a human being in the way he will detect a spoor and traces that would not catch a white man's notice; but we were completely unnoticed that day by black or white.

Of course by now we knew that we had walked right into the middle of a Boer farm; but I had been too tired the night before to care where I went. The difficulty now was to leave it so quietly at night that even the dogs might not hear us. At 7 o'clock we quitted the gum-tree thicket and made our way through mealie-fields and hedges till we were quite clear of our dangerous surroundings. The railway was quite close, and making for it we followed it until we found a gradient of 1 in 57 for some hundred metres. To-night our intention was to catch the train, jumping on board an empty truck as it moved slowly up the gradient. This would bring us to near Balmoral by daybreak. But we were destined to pass that night and the two next on the veldt. Lying down close to the railway, we remained till 2 A.M., but no train passed. It now seemed certain that the night-service no longer ran, and there was nothing left but to go on walking. For a couple of hours we followed the railway, and then began to look for water and a place to hide in. As there was a house close to the railway-line it seemed probable that we should find water of some sort near. In this we proved to be right, for we nearly walked into a circular pit, at the bottom of which were some inches of the precious liquid. Quenching our thirst and filling the bottle, we looked everywhere for some place that would hide us. There was nothing for it but to lie down by an ant-bear hole upon which we fortunately stumbled. The dwelling of this animal is a hole like a badger's, with a trench about two feet deep, and as broad, leading to the entrance. Here we lay down and prepared to be grilled for nine or ten hours, for there was no shade, and we had no means of making it without attracting notice; and our ten-ounce water-bottle would not go very far. In two more marches we should reach Balmoral, and once there, we had a very good hope of hiding ourselves in a coal-truck bound for Portuguese territory.

VI.—FROM VELDT TO COAL-MINE.

We had prepared ourselves for a warm day, but this one far exceeded our anticipations: however, so long as we remained well hidden and knew that at nightfall we should be cool and able to procure water, we had no great cause for complaint. Few Kaffirs passed our way and not a Dutchman, for except the house which stood close to the railway, no other human habitation was near. As usual we had got soaked to the waist in going through the long grass; but the hot sun soon remedied such a trifle, and before the day came to an end we would have given something to have been in a condition similar to that in which we had first invaded the ant-bear hole.

We calculated by the kilometres marked on the white boards at various points along the line that we had only covered thirty-six miles in four days—a poor record—and had still twenty-one to compass before we should reach the neighbourhood of the collieries at Balmoral. Short commons, lack of sleep, and want of water were beginning to have their effect upon us, and we thought we had done well when we had walked ten miles. It was scarcely dark when, our thirst having got beyond endurance, we hurried to the pool which we had enjoyed the night before.

Except an army emergency ration, which Le Mesurier had carefully preserved ever since he was captured at Dundee, and a scrap of biltong, we had nothing left to eat. Seating ourselves by this pool we broke into our last reserve, and seldom have I enjoyed a meal (if such it can be called) so much. This ration is intended to last the soldier for thirty-six hours, and it is divided into two parts, each in a small tin which is enclosed in a larger one. One tin contains what I cannot clearly describe, but it is a species of powder, greyish in colour, caked hard, and tasting slightly of "Bombay duck." The other tin is full of cocoa in a highly concentrated form, with a pleasant acid taste. They are both to be cooked or not, as circumstances will allow. Cooking-pots were not included in our kit, and means to light a fire, had we desired to do so, did not exist. We therefore dined off our delicacy in its raw state, but only ate about one-third of it, for it had to last two hungry men for seventy-two hours, not one soldier for thirty-six. Our supper at an end, we proceeded on our way, walking by the railway. From constant listening and peering through the darkness, eyes and ears had grown far more sensitive, and the least sound of voices, or dogs barking, or the faint glimmer of a light in a bridge-guard's tent, did not escape our senses. I cannot but think that the use of dogs in war by us British, a dog-loving nation, has been unaccountably overlooked. I believe certain nations—the Ger-

mans and French—use them; but we, who have our kennel-clubs, and every encouragement to breed the best and purest of the canine species, do not include these faithful friends among our war-material. In India, where one suffers so much from rifle-thieves, without his dog there would be many a court-martial on the owner of a stolen rifle. There the dogs are chained to the arm-racks, sentries with whose vigilance no human being can compete. Often in Tirah the wily Afridi would bring his dog with him when bent on disturbing our rest by firing into camp. He knew right well that if the plucky little Ghoorka was engaged in stalking him, his four-footed friend would give him timely warning.

Le Mesurier and I know what a curse were the dogs, within whose hearing we came on our way to Lorenço Marques; and I think that if we employed them on outpost duty, and trained them to growl softly when some stranger was approaching, the possibility of surprise would be greatly lessened, and the soldier on his lonely post, where he has to depend on the acuteness of his sight and hearing, would feel the value of this assistant.

After going for a few miles, we saw in front of us a tent in which was a light, and heard the low murmur of voices. As usual we left the line and made a detour, which brought us to the well-known Bronkhurst Spruit. Hurrying past this place of mournful memory, we soon came to the village of the same name. The dogs here seemed strangely restless, and as the moon was shining brightly, another wide detour on hands and knees was essential. Then we came to a river, and crossing it we regained the railway. A few miles farther on, with no incident worth recording, we began to think it was time to make our nightly search for a hiding-place. After a good deal of hunting up and down, backwards and forwards, we agreed to lie down in a swamp where the grass and reeds were high, and near which no human habitation could be seen. It was very wet, probably full of fever-germs; but no matter, we should have the wherewithal at hand with which to fight the sun when he rose.

Next day passed peacefully; we were evidently "far from the madding crowd," for all day long we did not see a soul except some Kaffirs, who were working on the railway-line some way off. Refreshed by a few hours' sleep, we made our way to the railway as twilight turned to night, and, avoiding one or two bridge-guards, reached some running water. The night was very dark, and two Dutchmen passed close by us while we lay down, and crossing rivers by faith and not by sight is not pleasant work.

The river we had reached is called the Wilde river, and it has here several branches. After negotiating four, we thought no more remained; but a girder railway-bridge

was dimly visible on our right, a gentle hint that all were not yet passed. The Boer who guarded this bridge must have heard us, for he came out of his tent with a lantern, and, while we lay hidden in the wet grass, listened for some time. Of course at the very moment he appeared the moon began to rise over the crest of a hill in front of us; but as the lantern soon disappeared, we rose and continued our travels.

A few paces brought us to the edge of a most uninviting-looking river — one of those sluggish, stagnant streams such as one meets with in Belgium. Neither of us was in the mood for a swim — it was too early in the evening for that; and on trying its depth I found it reached to my waist, and its bottom was composed of soft mud. Along the bank we walked, and were soon rewarded by hearing the sound of running water, and a little farther brought us to a shallow ford. This crossed, we found ourselves on a hillside covered with loose stones, an ideal spot for spraining an ankle. The moon came to our rescue, and we again struck the railway without mishap. We now thought that Balmoral could not be far off, and the hope of reaching there before dawn made us push along quickly. In consequence we nearly walked into a tent, and had to hide beside the railway till, after reconnoitring, I ascertained that we had not been seen. Before us on either side of the railway were farms, easily recognisable by the clumps of trees around the buildings. Leaving the railway, we followed a stream through a cut in the hills, and bearing to our left came upon it again.

Suddenly we were aware of an odour familiar to us both, the smell of burning coal. We had not expected to find a colliery so close, nor was there one, for the wind brought from a distance what our nasal organs had at once detected. However, we very soon came upon a siding full of coal-trucks. I now made a systematic examination of every truck, to see by the ticket on it where its contents were bound for. It is not the custom to put the full name of a place on these labels, and had I seen L.M., I should have known that it meant Lorenço Marques. But nearly all these trucks were labelled N.C. or J.K. There was no mistaking the first two letters,—they must stand for Newcastle in Natal; but as for J.K., it was Greek to us. Close by the siding there was a small Kaffir hut, outside which were some embers where the occupants had cooked their evening meal.

We were tempted to try to clear up the situation, and find out if any trucks were bound for our destination; but it was 2 A.M., the Kaffirs were asleep, and we returned to a very swampy spot which we had passed on our way. First cutting down some rushes, we spread them in the swamp, and lay down to snatch a few hours' sleep, which the mosquitoes were determined we should

not have. The night was very cold, and as I had had rheumatism ever since the night we took to the river, I was right glad when the sun rose. The day was very warm; but there was more than enough of water, and our hopes were high, for we were determined to secure a truck at one or other of the colliery sidings, and get the rest of our journey over. All day long the noise of the shunting at the siding, where we had been so early in the morning, could be heard, and more than one train seemed to leave it. We hoped that there might be some trucks for Delagoa Bay, where many ships must surely stop to coal.

Towards evening a middle-aged Boer, accompanied by a boy and armed with a sporting rifle, passed us not far off. As luck would have it, a bird, not unlike a curlew, rose from the swamp close to us and flew behind him; but he neither heard nor saw it, and soon they disappeared from view.

The weather, which all day had been very sultry, now began to look most threatening. From every quarter black clouds seemed to roll towards that part of the sky which overhung our swamp. There was no mistaking these signs—we were in for a very heavy storm. Half-past five passed and still it did not come, but by six the rain had begun to fall, and a few minutes later we left the swamp drenched to the skin. Amid flashes of lightning which caused the veldt to look bright as day, and the thunder's sullen roar, we made our way to the Kaffir hut at the siding.

Before leaving our hiding-place we had finished every scrap of food we possessed. Not even an inch of biltong remained. Miserable objects, indeed, were we when we came opposite the coal-siding. Not a stitch of dry clothing on us, hungry and weak; but shelter and perhaps food were to be found inside the hut, and Le Mesurier had impressed on me from previous experience that Kaffirs were absolutely to be trusted.

The door was open and a light burned within. We entered, and saluting the occupants with the Kaffir greeting, "*Sacabona?*" (How do you do?) sat down. There were five thick-lipped, ebony-coloured negroes seated round a caldron, which, turned on its side, displayed its half-eaten contents — thick dry mealie-meal porridge. Without another word we joined the circle, those nearest us drawing aside their mats, for the rain-water was running off us on to the hard mud floor. Indicating our desire to share their meal, the vessel was tilted towards us, and stretching forth a hand we drew forth a lump of the coagulated mess. We were both so hungry that the desire for food left us when it was within our grasp; but after a short time the craving returned, and we did justice to the simple fare.

Meantime we had tried the few Kaffir words and sentences we knew upon our black friends, one of whom took pride in repeating his very few words of

English. The conversation was not long sustained, and having satisfied our hunger we left the hut. It was pouring still, and the prospect of finding other coal-sidings and examining trucks without the aid of a light was not a pleasing one. We, therefore, entered the hut again, having decided that we would disclose who we were and try to enlist the help of its occupants. It was easily explained that we were Englishmen from Pretoria running away from the Boers and making for Delagoa Bay. We at once had the sympathy of all, who showed their hatred of the Dutch by signs and gestures. The next question was to explain what we wanted them to do. I happened on the previous evening, for no particular reason, to have taken the label off a truck and put it in my pocket; producing it, no word of explanation was required. Two of the Kaffirs left the hut and did not return for some minutes, but when they did they brought with them several other labels. Looking at them, we found that none of them bore the mystic letters L.M. Again they went out. We now gave five sovereigns to the elderly Kaffir who seemed to be the *doyen* of them all, and made him understand that they were his if he could get us a truck for Delagoa Bay. Before we left Pretoria, Sergeant Brockie had given me some slight instruction in the Kaffir tongue, and having some suitable sentences written down, I read them out, much to the curiosity of the listeners, who wanted to see the paper on which they were inscribed. After several more visits had been paid to the coal-trucks, it seemed certain that none was bound for the coast. The old Kaffir then handed back the gold, and giving him a trifle in return for the food, we again left the hut.

Outside everything looked so black and unpromising that we agreed to put our fate entirely in the hands of the five Kaffirs. For the third and last time we entered the hut and asked them point-blank who their *baas* was. Was he an Englishman or a Dutchman? The reply came from all that he was the former and lived not far away, and we thereupon decided to go and ask his help. It might be that we should find that he was a man on parole to take no part in the war, and to remain neutral; but it could do no harm to see him and obtain some food and information. We therefore indicated that we wanted one of them to conduct us to his house; whereupon the youngest Kaffir rose, put on an ancient overcoat, and we went forth again into the night. The rain had ceased, and, following our guide, we crossed the siding, feeling that our difficulties were coming to an end.

In the distance a burning slack-heap of a coal-mine could be seen against the sable background of the sky. It looked nearer than it was, for almost an hour passed before we got into close proximity to it; but the walk seemed to dry our clothes, and we stumbled along in the dark, anxious to know

what was in store for us. Passing some sheds, we came to the pit's mouth, and then climbing over some rubbish-heaps, found ourselves facing a row of one-storeyed dwellings. Our cicerone indicated that he had performed his part of the undertaking, and that the manager's habitation lay before us. Knocking on his door, a voice bade us enter. We did so, and found ourselves in the presence of a tall fair man, who later told us that he thought we were Boers. I asked him if he were an Englishman. He replied that he was, but from his accent and appearance he looked more like a Swede. Eventually he informed us that he was a native of Denmark, whereupon I told him my name was of Danish origin. I then inquired if he were on parole, as we wanted his help. As he replied in the negative, I added that we wanted to travel to Delagoa Bay concealed in a coal-truck, and asked how far he could help us. He remained lost in thought for several minutes, and then said that it would be difficult; that his mine was sending no coal to the sea-coast; but that three trucks were to be loaded for Lorenço Marques at a small mine close by on the following morning, and that he would try to have the loading postponed till night, so that we could reach our hiding-place unseen. This meant taking another man into our confidence, but as he was a Scotsman there was no objection. He said that he would arrange the matter at once, but the question was where to put us for the night. On my suggesting the coal-mine, he said that there were several Hollanders on duty there, none of whom could be trusted to keep their counsel.

Le Mesurier and I then said that the veldt was good enough for us, and that if he could get us some food, we would lie out all night and come to some appointed place next evening. He answered he would bring the storekeeper to us, and, leaving the room, shortly returned with that, to us, most welcome individual.

Mr Moore, the manager of the Douglas Colliery store, now took complete charge of us. He led us to his house, which stood in a garden quite apart from any others, and soon we were seated at his hospitable table eating as if our lives depended on it. Our first civilised meal for over three weeks consisted of tinned salmon, cocoa, and the usual adjuncts. I think we horrified our host by our indecent rapacity, but it gave him a good idea of what we should require on the morrow. Mr Moore told us that he was the son of a late Indian general who had served in the 13th Madras Native Infantry, and that his brother, in the Imperial Light Horse, had fought at Elandslaagte side by side with my regiment.

It was a great relief no longer to talk in whispers, and our voices sounded strange to us. Our host occupied himself

in considering where to lodge us for the night, and decided to put us in a forage-shed next the store, which was generally occupied by his Kaffir boys, who need not know who we were. The moon was up, and we made our way to the shed. In the next house was an Irishman who was in sympathy with the Boers and had some grievance against Moore, so we were cautioned to keep very quiet. With apologies for putting us in such a place—a palace to what we had been accustomed to of late—Moore left us for the night.

A deep sense of contentment and satisfaction now came over us, partly engendered by the feeling of repletion, and of being able to look forward to a much-wanted night's rest without mosquitoes. A slight arrangement of the forage bundles was necessary, and this made, we were soon fast asleep, despite numbers of mice whose dwellings we had invaded. At a quarter-past six next morning we were startled by hearing some one knocking at the small window, which was partly covered by a sack to hide our presence within. Whoever it was next came round to the door, which was bolted inside. Cautiously opening it a few inches, a black face peered in at me, and the owner thereof having apparently satisfied his curiosity gave a loud guffaw and went off. Shortly after this a man's face appeared at the window and shouted something in Dutch. Receiving no answer, he tried us in English, saying, "Hulloo! who tould you to doss down there?" Le Mesurier said by mistake, "Mr Johnstone," which was the name of the Dane who had passed us on to Moore. This seemed to excite the inquirer's ire, probably because this store was Moore's, and saying, "Damn his cheek!" he went off. It left with us a rather uncomfortable feeling that, not knowing who the strangers were, he might reveal what he had seen to some one better kept in ignorance. Our fears were dispelled when at 9 o'clock Moore appeared, bringing with him our recent visitor, who turned out to be the butcher of the mine, and lived next door. He told us that he was a Natal-born Englishman, and had been compelled by the Boers, being a burgher, to fight at Elandslaagte and Spion Kop; but that he had made a rapid strategical move to the rear at the former fight and escaped the Lancers. He said he had avoided pointing his rifle so as to inflict damage on his fellow-countrymen.

A door which led from the store into the forage-shed was now opened, and throughout this day a liberal supply of meat and drink was passed in to us. At 10 o'clock we were told that the medical man who had charge of the miners, and happened to be making one of his occasional visits, was coming in to see us. Dr Gillespie, one of those fortunate beings whose voice and manner at once inspire confidence, now entered the shed. He told us that, purely on chance of hear-

ing some news at the mine, he had driven over from Brug Spruit on the previous day, and stopping the night had chanced to hear in the morning that the escaped prisoners, of whom every one knew, had at length arrived.

The extraordinary chain of circumstances which had brought us to the mine, exactly at the right time, was now made evident to us. Had not Le Mesurier delayed us owing to his sprained ankle, had not the thunderstorm driven us to the Kaffirs' hut, we should probably never have heard of Dr Gillespie. It was not his usual day for visiting the mine. He now told us his plans for getting us safely over the border. He and some others had managed it for Churchill, and they would do the same for us. He told us to say nothing to any one of the fact that they had helped Churchill, and that when it grew dark he would drive us to another mine, where plans for the future would be matured. He added that we might now consider ourselves out of the country, our further movements would be so devoid of risk. Bidding us farewell till evening, and saying that the coal-truck plan was now at an end, he left us.

Another visitor followed, Mr Haughton, manager of the adjacent mine, which was sending the three trucks of coal to Delagoa Bay. He was an old soldier, and had served in the Zulu war, and knew a man I have not met for years, Captain M'Kie of the 91st Highlanders, as well as Colonel Curtis of the Inniskilling Dragoons. If this should meet the eye of either, he may be interested to know that Haughton was anxious to be remembered to them. He told us that Dr Gillespie had an excellent plan for getting us out of the country, and we could entirely rely upon him.

During the day a gramophone played numerous topical airs for our amusement, and when it grew dark Moore came and took us again to his house. Here we found, thanks to his thoughtful kindness, a complete change of garments, for our own were fit for nothing but the dust-heap. We also enjoyed the luxury of a bath, and were much amused at the reflection of ourselves in a looking-glass.

After we had had supper, a number of Englishmen employed on the mine came and, out of curiosity and interest in our escape, asked to see us. I felt glad that we were not remaining at this mine, for far too many knew our secret; and though each individual would keep it inviolate, still an indiscreet remark might lead to our discovery.

Dr Gillespie left before us to see his horses inspanned, and shortly afterwards, conducted by Moore, we bade adieu to the occupants of the house, and striking across the veldt went to the appointed place where we were to join the doctor. It had been considered unsafe to meet him at the mine.

VII.—AT THE COAL-MINE.

Following our conductor down the lower slopes of the hill, on the summit of which, strange to say, the coal-mine was situated, the lights from the burning slack-heaps grew less distinct. On reaching the level no signs of the doctor were visible. Matches were lighted, but no responsive flash answered ours. At length Moore returned along the way we had come, and having met his assistant a short distance off, came and told us that the doctor had decided to take another route, one which was better than that he had at first intended to follow.

Retracing our footsteps, we came upon him near the mine. He was seated in a two-wheeled dog-cart, to which a pair of grey horses were harnessed. Climbing up beside him, we took our places on the front seat, and the hood of the trap was raised. We bade farewell to Moore, and, taking with us his earnest good wishes for our freedom, started.

The night was intensely dark, and until the moon rose—for we were driving without lamps—we could barely see a horse's length before us. I have mentioned the difficulty we had on leaving Eerst Fabriken of finding our way by road when walking; now we were to experience a similar difficulty while driving. The doctor knew the road well; but the numerous tracks, of which in parts it consisted, made it difficult to follow the right one.

Many times during that drive of fourteen miles we were on the eve of upsetting; but fortune favoured us, and though we rolled from side to side at the bad places, like a ship broadside on in a heavy swell, we never quite went over. Part of the journey took us close to the railway. There was a possibility of some inquisitive Dutchman stopping to speak to the doctor, and becoming suspicious when he saw three persons in the cart, for the usual number it carried was two; but we saw no one, and only at one place where we crossed the railway had I to squeeze down behind the splash-board.

The doctor told us he was taking us to the Transvaal Delagoa Bay Company's colliery. Reaching it, he would hand us over to Mr Howard, who had arranged for Churchill's escape, and he himself would go home to Brug Spruit, four miles off. Even if any of the Hollanders should chance to hear that we had been at the Douglas Colliery for one night, they would have no idea where we had gone afterwards, and, the ground being very dry and hard, the cart would leave but an indifferent spoor.

It was half-past one in the morning of Saturday, 24th March, when we drew up near the office of the colliery where we were to be the hospitable manager's guests for several days. All was silent and deserted, except for the presence

of the two Kaffir boys on guard outside the office. Dr Gillespie got down a short way from the office, and after a few minutes conducted us into a room behind it. Here the occupant of the room and I mutually recognised one another. It was no other than the Englishman whom, as I related before, I had seen, with another, walk past the Staats Model School. That other very soon joined us, and was introduced to us as Mr Burnham, the manager of the mine store. The first, whose name was Adams, was assistant-manager. They now told me that they had passed the school, wondering how they could communicate with us to help some of us to escape. Adams left the room in search of the manager, who lives a short distance from the office. When he knocked at the door of Mr Howard's room a voice said, "Anything wrong?" The reply, "Pumps broken down," was given. Mr Howard afterwards told us that he instinctively said to himself, "They've come at last." He had made up his mind that we should somehow reach his coal-mine, and had kept Kaffirs out night after night near the railway watching for us. He also had for nights past played "God save the Queen" on his piano, with the windows open, lest we passing that way should hear and crave admittance.

Soon the objects of so much solicitude saw before them a tall, spare, clean-shaven man—evidently a man of strong purpose and resolution. The resemblance of the manager to Von Moltke struck me at once. His arrival was the signal for a decision to be come to regarding our disposal. It appeared that Churchill, or Dr Bentock (which was the name he assumed while here), had lived down the mine on his first arrival, and afterwards in a room next to the office. This was an inconvenient arrangement, as it involved taking into the secret three English miners; and there was a further difficulty about food. It was decided, therefore, that Mr Howard, who generally had his meals at the office, should be unwell for the next few days and feed at his own house, and that we should take up our quarters with him. To make the arrangement safe, it would be necessary to take into our confidence two English servant-girls and a Kaffir boy. We now left the room and went to Mr Howard's house, and, before going to bed, had bound to secrecy the three whom it was necessary to confide in.

When morning came we heard with interest how Winston Churchill had found his way to the manager's house. He had left Pretoria, according to plan, the same evening as he had got out of the Model School, and with some difficulty had succeeded in climbing into a coal-truck on the 10 P.M. train. Travelling all night till he reached the vicinity of Balmoral, he had left the train, waited till dark, and,

following the line, had seen before him the electric lights of the Whitbank Colliery. As this colliery is managed by Frenchmen, and there are very few Englishmen on it, discovery meant capture. Making towards the lights, he was fortunate to lose sight of them in a dip of the ground, and when he got on to the flat again he saw in front of him the glimmer of a slack-heap. He now directed his steps towards this, and eventually arrived at Mr Howard's house. The garden was tidy and looked like an Englishman's, and he knocked at the door. In reply to Mr Howard, who opened it, he said that he had fallen off a train and lost his way. It soon came out who he was, and he was there and then put down the mine. The name which he used was assumed, so that all who knew the secret at the mine could talk of him more freely.

At this time Mr Burnham was sending seven trucks of wool to Lorenço Marques, and a hiding-place was made for Churchill in one of them between the bales. Accompanied by Mr Burnham, who travelled on the same train and bribed the officials to let the trucks go right through, he reached, after some delays, his destination. Suspicion, however, was roused through a member of the firm to whom the wool was consigned noticing some marks of grease on the bales, which seemed to say that some one had occupied the truck. This person made inquiries from Burnham, who professed ignorance; but he was undoubtedly suspected, for he had been seen walking with a stranger at the time the wool arrived at Lorenço Marques, and a little time after a Dutchman asked him in Pretoria how much he had got for getting Churchill out of the country.

In spite of the risk he ran, however, he was prepared to repeat the experience for our benefit; but it was decided that as a certain amount of wool was still being sent by various persons to Lorenço Marques, and as many goods-trucks were detached for twelve hours at Middleburg, a short distance off, he and Adams should keep a look-out at Whitbank station and note the trucks that passed eastward. Hiding in one of these trucks, we could get out of the country without throwing suspicion on Burnham. If, however, none should stop at Middleburg, Burnham would buy sufficient wool for one truck-load, and send us with it, accompanying it as he had done before. Mr Howard set his face against any one connected with the wool travelling by the same train as it; and in the end—for we were entirely of his opinion—Burnham, for some reason, which made me feel it was connected with the despatch of the wool, was refused a passport. After martial law had been proclaimed in the Transvaal no one could travel without a pass, and this had to be applied for in person from a field-cornet.

The day of our arrival at the coal-mine, Adams and Burnham drove to Whitbank and brought back news of Brockie, to the effect that he had arrived there that morning, and had gone to a store and asked for work. He had been passed on to another store, where was an Englishman whom he knew. A passport, the name on which was altered after it had been obtained, had been procured for him as far as Kaapmuiden, forty-six miles from the border. Travelling there by train, he was, on arrival, to go to an Englishman, who would provide him with a Kaffir guide to take him over the border. I will leave him here for the present; but will say in passing that my fears of his getting into Portuguese territory before us were renewed.

Adams had been to the station to see the afternoon train pass, and had noticed one truck loaded with wool, which would do well for us if it were detached at Middleburg. Next day they drove there, but no truck had been left.

From Mr Howard I gathered that he had studied engineering in England—his father having been in the Royal Engineers—and had lived in the Free State for many years, had taken part in several expeditions against neighbouring tribes who had broken out; and as the Boers imagined he was a burgher—which he was not—he feared he might have to go to the front. He was on very good terms, however, with the field-cornet of his district, and hoped to avoid this disagreeable contingency. He had contemplated letting the officers in Pretoria know that if any escaped they must come to him, but his plan of sending a message inside a tennis-ball was too risky, with the police living in the back-yard of the school, and he had been obliged to give it up.

I have seldom experienced such care and kindness as he gave us during the few days we were under his roof. It must be remembered that he and the others who were helping us to complete our escape ran the risk of being shot if they were found out, yet they never hesitated to undertake the plan which eventually proved successful.

Both Le Mesurier and I were beginning to feel the effects of our outing, and Mr Howard did everything he could devise to make us fit and well before we left him.

Except to take a walk with us after dark towards the Whitbank lights, he rarely left the house for long, lest the field-cornet or some other dangerous person should chance to call. Dr Gillespie came over and paid us several visits, and promised to put in an appearance the night we were consigned to the truck. It was explained to us how impossible escape in a coal-truck would have been. If we had selected one in which the coal was stored in bags, we could never have made a hiding-place which would have been safe, for the

shunting of the trucks would have brought down the sacks of coal on our heads. Also, it was the custom on the railway, in order to prevent theft, to throw chalk all over the top-most layer of bags, and any shifting of them on our part would have been detected at once.

I told them at the Douglas Colliery that the plan had been to build with planks a hole sufficiently large to hold us, which would have been hidden with the sacks. They laughed at the idea, and said we should have been suffocated by the heat and coal-dust, and, worse than all, those who had helped us would have been discovered, unless the consignee at Delagoa happened to be in the secret, which in our case he would not have been.

On the return of Adams and Burnham a consultation was held, and it was decided that the latter should buy up sufficient bales of wool to make up a truck-load — sixteen would be required — telegraph to the same firm at Lorenço Marques, offering them the wool for cash or its equivalent in kind, and say that it must be sold. The anxiety to get rid of the bales might arouse suspicion, but we could not expect to avoid every risk.

Accordingly on Monday, 26th March, a telegram was sent to the firm at Lorenço Marques, and by evening a reply came, accepting the load of wool on satisfactory terms. Burnham knew where he could lay hands on a supply of the necessary article to complete the truck-load, and by the following Wednesday the amount required was collected. The project of our stopping at Komati Poort to see if it were possible to blow up the bridge was discussed, but finally vetoed, since most of the supplies required by the Transvaal and Free State had been already collected in the country, and the quantity now coming in by this route was insignificant.

On Wednesday the truck arrived from Whitbank drawn by one of the colliery locomotives. All day it remained on the line immediately outside the office, and from the manager's house we could see Burnham and Adams busily superintending the special manner in which it had to be loaded for our comfort and concealment.

In order that the reader may better understand the kind of place we were to occupy for sixty-three hours, I will describe it in as few words as I can. The bales of wool, weighing each four hundred pounds, were in size about five feet long by two feet and a half broad and the same in depth. There were in all, I think, sixteen to be loaded into the truck. The truck itself was an empty coal-waggon, about eighteen feet long and seven wide, with sides of some three feet in height. Three bales of wool were laid end on at one side of the truck and three on the other. Above these were laid three parallel rows of three bales each; and as there were

only two rows on the floor of the truck, occupying a total breadth of five feet, there remained a kind of tunnel down the centre of the truck. Other bales were placed above those already in position, and when all was down there remained a space for us to sit in at the end of the truck three feet by seven. This space was available because the waggon was eighteen feet long, and three bales endwise occupied only fifteen feet.

Le Mesurier and I decided that we would turn our trousers inside out, for we had been told that the floor of the truck, although it had been swept out, would be very dirty, and we afterwards found that, in addition to this, there were numerous splinters of wood. Although it had been impressed upon us that we were almost as "safe as a house" regarding detection, I had an inward feeling that our adventures were not quite over.

Mr Howard made elaborate arrangements for victualling our novel carriage for the journey, since it was quite impossible to say how many days we might have to remain in it. I think we had with us—we had to throw away a good deal unused—a roast duck, chicken, a tin of smoked beef, butter, jam, and plenty of bread, besides some things I have forgotten. For drink we had nine bottles of cold tea, two of water, and one of whisky. With this we could hold out for a week if need be, but Burnham thought that his efforts to induce the chef (as the local station-master is called) to hook us on to the passenger train had prevailed. Bribery, as I have said before, will do most things with a Transvaal Dutchman; but there are many others besides him who have their price.

That night the doctor came over to see us and bid us good luck on our journey. He and the others had dined at the manager's house, but we broke up early, as we were to be afoot at 4.30 A.M. The two Kaffir boys who kept guard outside the office had been got rid of on some pretext, for they would have seen us climbing into the truck. Mr Howard lent me his pocket aneroid, and as they do not call out the stations on the Delagoa Bay line, and I had no time-table, by means of this instrument, knowing the height above sea-level of each station, I always knew where we were when we stopped.

All arrangements for the morrow being ready, we bade our host good night and went to bed.

VIII.—OVER THE BORDER.

Punctually at 4.30 A.M., while it was still dark, we walked to the truck. The tarpaulin which covered it was thrown back, and we began storing the provisions and bottles in the

numerous interstices between the woollen bales. This took a little care in arranging, and it was 5 A.M. before Le Mesurier and I climbed into the waggon which was to be our dwelling for the next two and a half days. A parting hand-shake all round being concluded, the tarpaulin was made secure by its numerous ropes to the links fixed to the lower edge of the outside of the truck. As we should find it very warm under this covering, one of the bales had been so arranged as to bulge over the edge of the truck, pushing out the tarpaulin and leaving space for the air to enter by.

We lay on the floor of the truck until ten o'clock, when Mr Howard passed by, and asking us if we were all right, said good-bye again. Shortly after this we were taken by a colliery engine to the Whitbank station. One or two trains passed us, and we listened anxiously to hear if we were going to be picked up and taken on by them. At 2.30 a train, evidently from the direction of Pretoria, drew up at the station. Soon after we heard the rumbling sound and clank of an engine coming our way; this was followed by a bump and a jerk forward. We then found ourselves being moved forward, next a halt and a backward push, and we knew that we were on the passenger train. If we were not detached at Middleburg, we should be at any rate carried to Waterfall Boven, one hundred and thirty miles from the frontier and one hundred and sixty-four from Pretoria. This would be a goodly step towards freedom.

Middleburg was passed, and we were not detached.

I was agreeably surprised that the engine had treated us so politely when it took us up, and not charged us as if to test the buffer-springs. My only previous experience of goods-train travelling had been when escorting ammunition from Dublin to Belfast in 1888. Then, though I travelled in a first-class carriage attached to the train, I was most unmercifully dealt with, more than once during the journey being shot off the seat on which I was lying. The driver of our engine on the present occasion was evidently of a more gentle nature, and treated us, who were lying on the wooden floor with nothing to deaden the shock, more kindly.

The journey was singularly uninteresting, for until I cut a hole in the tarpaulin the next day, we could see nothing of the country we were passing through. At every thirteen miles or so there was a station, and at every station we stopped. Occasionally we heard a few words of English, but far more often it was Dutch. I made it a rule on approaching each station or halting-place to retire into the tunnel, lest any one should lift up the tarpaulin and look in. This was quite unnecessary, but it was best to be on the safe side. Now we were puffing and panting up a steep gradient, and again, shutting

off steam, we glided smoothly down. During the afternoon's journey we passed the highest point on the line, called Belfast. Here the line attains to an elevation of six thousand four hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level, and in the twenty-seven miles which follow drops nearly two thousand feet to Waterfall Boven. At this station the train stops for the night, the passengers remaining in their carriages or stopping at the diminutive hotel which I believe exists here. We remained in our carriage, and were kept company by a few mosquitoes.

We passed a fairly uncomfortable night, and started again at 6.20 A.M. After leaving the station the line drops at a gradient so steep that the engine here used is provided with a cog-wheel, as on the Righi, Monte Generoso, and other European mountain railways. I believe the line passes through some very fine scenery; but if so it was lost upon us, for we could not see outside our dingy truck. At one point we passed through a tunnel—the only one, I think, on any Transvaal railway. Before reaching Komati Poort, a station on the western side of the Komati river, we thought it advisable to part with nearly all our stores. At this place, which is the last station in the Transvaal, we knew the truck would be searched, if it were to be searched at all. We therefore pitched bottles, tins, &c., out on the line, and reserved only a very small amount, in case we were unable to leave the truck as soon as we expected. We fully thought that, having got so close to the border, we should be in Portuguese territory this day; and on reaching the frontier station it was a bitter disappointment to find ourselves detached and pushed into a siding.

Before reaching the station we had retired into our tunnel, and I, being the longest and thinnest, had entered it first, feet leading. By squeezing myself a good deal and keeping on my side, I could get nearly to the other end of the truck; and Le Mesurier, who followed me, had his head, which was to be covered by a coat in the event of a search, about five feet from the entrance to the hole. We had retired into this uncomfortable region, as I have said, about 2.20 P.M., and when we found ourselves detached we heard the chattering of several Kaffirs just outside the truck. It was very warm and exceedingly uncomfortable, and I was glad to hear our train move off about 3 o'clock, as our fate would be decided soon one way or the other.

A few minutes of suspense passed, and then we heard a gruff voice giving some order to the Kaffirs. The next moment a chill shot through me, and my thoughts returned to Pretoria. We heard the rattle of the links as the ropes of the tarpaulin which were tied to them at our end of the truck were unloosened. The moments that followed defy description: so many thoughts

were crowded into one's mind, thoughts of recapture and ruin to all hopes of seeing more of the campaign. Soon the tarpaulin was lifted up and thrown back over the top of the truck. What happened neither of us occupants will ever know, for we dared not move to look; but the daylight from above and from the end of the tunnel flooded in upon us, and we felt that discovery was unavoidable. The search must have been most perfunctory, though in our excited imagination it seemed to last an age. Then the tarpaulin was returned to its place, the ropes made fast, and the Kaffirs resumed their chattering. The thought that crossed my mind was that we had been seen, but that the searcher, remarking to himself that there were two of us, had deemed it wiser to go for assistance. In this stifling hole — and there was very little air where I was — we lay till 5 o'clock. I could bear it no longer, and my limbs were becoming cramped; so, catching hold of my companion's foot, I intimated my desire to get into a more open space. We moved forward into the empty part of the truck, and concluded that we had had a marvellous escape from recapture. Shortly afterwards we found the cause of the Kaffir colloquy. There was a water-pipe to one side of the truck, and they were washing when we were first put into the siding. We found that we had to keep absolute silence till after dark, as the path to this stand-pipe was soft, and no footstep could be heard on it. On looking out through the hole I had cut in the tarpaulin, I saw that we were in the station, and three lines distant from the platform.

The next day was Saturday, and we hoped greatly that we might not be left on the wrong side of the river, for on the Sunday following no train might be running. In our expectation of reaching the Portuguese territory on Friday, we had parted with more of our food and drink than was wise. When morning came a certain amount of shunting seemed to be going on in the station, and for a long time no engine came our way. At length at 9.30 A.M. we felt the shaking caused by an engine moving on the same line of rails as our truck. In considerable anxiety we waited. Then came a very welcome bump, and we were hauled forward and then backed into the station. At 9.40 the train steamed off, and a minute later we were thundering over the fine bridge which spans the Komati river. We grasped each other's hands, and with difficulty suppressed a shout of exultation. Five minutes later, on looking through the tarpaulin, I saw what I had been told to look out for, a white conical pillar. This was the boundary between the Transvaal and Portuguese territory. We were free! Now that what one had hoped and struggled to attain for so long had at length come, it was

difficult to realise it,—difficult to believe that one's Anabasis was at an end.

A minute more and our goods train stopped at the back of Ressano Garcia station, the first in Portuguese territory. As we did not want to be seen getting out lest the owner of the wool might thereby become suspected, we decided to remain in the truck till dark. We had finished our water, and it was very warm, and for eight or nine hours we should get none. Many a time during that day I thought of Byron's lines—

> "Ring for a valet, bid him quickly bring
> Some hock and soda-water, then you'll know
> A pleasure worthy Xerxes, the great king."

One would have given a good deal for an iced drink of that description.

It was a long weary day. At 3.15 the Transvaal train rattled into the station, evidently carrying some refugees, for the strains of the National Anthem reached our ears. At half-past six Le Mesurier leant as far out of the truck as he could and undid one of the tarpaulin ropes. I handed out to him all that was left of our food and followed him. While we were engaged in doing this no fewer than six Kaffirs passed the truck, and we had to hide underneath it. Tying up the rope, we crossed the main line, and after throwing away the remains of our provender, went to a Kaffir kraal which was quite near. Here we found out that the hotel which is in the station was kept by two Englishmen, and we at once proceeded thither. Seeing one sitting outside on the platform, I asked him if he were an Englishman. Receiving a reply in the affirmative, I informed him who we were. Champagne was clearly indicated, and after suitably toasting the occasion, we sat down to supper, which was continued to a pretty late hour.

There were no Transvaal agents here, we were told, and no one to bother us; but it would be best to hide the fact of our being escaped prisoners until we reached Delagoa Bay.

IX.—MEN MUST ENDURE.

I would not have exchanged my feelings on waking on Sunday, 1st of April, for a very great deal. Had we really escaped? Were we not under some deception, born of this day—All Fools'-day—the New Year of the British army? No! Here we could behave like ordinary mortals; there was no longer need to whisper, to emulate the habits of some wild animals, crouching in their dens by day and only coming forth at night. Strange, that the difference of being on one side or the other of a stone pillar should have brought this about!

But one could not lie all day

indulging in this entrancing reverie—other things had to be thought of. Our landlord provided us with a guide and some clean garments, and despatched us to the river. When lying all night in the truck at Komati Poort, I had been tempted to leave it, and, swimming the river, settle at once the question of freedom. Fortunately I had not done so, for we were told that it was infested with crocodiles, which, when they got the chance, carried off any unfortunate Kaffir who came their way. It was not a pleasant-looking river—muddy, rocky, and fast-flowing—and we did not stray far from the edge.

The village of Ressano Garcia—if it can be so called, for there are only half-a-dozen houses—is a very quiet, unhealthy spot, and, except for one or two people who boarded at the hotel, we saw no one till the up-train from Lorenço Marques arrived about noon. There were many inquiries as to who we were, and one man on his way to the Transvaal, who spoke to me, asked me if I were not an escaped prisoner?

At 3 o'clock our train arrived, and shortly afterwards we left, travelling at last in comfort. Our carriage, which was a corridor, was fairly crowded, and soon after the train was in motion, a party of Dutchmen in another compartment burst forth into their national Volkslied. This was more than British flesh and blood could stand. We immediately rose, and speedily drowned their voices with our own. Scarcely had we got through the opening words when Uitlander after Uitlander, their faces beaming at hearing this familiar tune, crowded into our compartment and into the passage and joined us. The Dutchmen wisely ceased, and for some minutes I thought it would end in their leaving the train by an exit other than the door. After our vocal efforts had come to an end, with their usual cheers our neighbours began "La Marseillaise," and we constrained ourselves to permit them this safety-valve.

The evening was approaching as we neared the end of our journey, and from the windows we could see the calm blue sea which runs far inland. Like Xenophon and his Greeks of old, we gazed upon it with delight, and realised with what heartfelt thanks they had broken into their cry, "Thalassa! Thalassa!"

Soon the station was reached, crowded with those who had come to see more refugees arrive. Passing quickly through them, for we were troubled with no baggage, we drove to the Cardoza Hotel, picturesquely situated on the high ground overlooking the bay. We had intended to keep our secret; but (how I did not know) every one seemed to be already in possession of it. That evening I gave Mr Douglas, the courteous correspondent of the 'Times,' a brief account of our adventures, omitting everything about our having hidden under the floor of the Model School. My reason for doing so was that

Le Mesurier, Brockie, and I had, in the interests of those who had helped and fed us and remained behind, bound ourselves to say nothing about that part of our story until the end of the war.

Later in the evening I received a request from Mr Fritz Pincus, Reuter's correspondent (who with his colleague, Mr Minzesheimer, an American gentleman, treated us most hospitably), that I would kindly call on him. I did so, and gave him a brief account similar to that I had given to the other correspondent. After I had finished he remarked to me, "How long did you remain hidden under the floor? for you have told me nothing about that."

I was dumfoundered. Here was a man in Lorenço Marques in possession of what we were sworn to keep secret. Questioning him, I found out how it had reached his ears, and indeed those of most of the inhabitants of Lorenço Marques, including Mr Carnegie Ross, the British consul. He did not then tell me who was his informant, but only that it was some one who had left Pretoria after we had hidden. I felt sure that no one had left who knew me except three British officers released on parole, and they had been ignorant that we were hidden, and even had they not been, they were to be trusted. Here was a puzzle that I could not solve.

Next morning I gave the 'Times' correspondent that portion of my tale that I had omitted the previous evening. Concealment was no longer of any use, as Lorenço Marques swarms with Transvaal agents, who doubtless long ago had reported to their Government.

One thing Le Mesurier and I felt thankful for, and that was, that considering it must have been known in the Transvaal that we had not escaped on the 26th of February, but only after the prisoners were removed, on the 16th of March, we were remarkably fortunate to have escaped at all. After making some inquiries, I succeeded in tracing the matter to its source.

It seemed that Sergeant Brockie, on reaching Kaapmuiden, had found that the person to whom he was consigned had just died. He got employment at the station-bar at that place. A few days after, a clergyman, whom I met, saw him and got part of his story from him; but, unknown to us, a certain person, not an officer, had been released on parole from Pretoria. Here was the offender, though not primarily responsible. This person had seen Brockie at the Kaapmuiden bar, who told him our adventures from beginning to end. On reaching Lorenço Marques he had indiscreetly parted with what he had been told, and so the facts of our escape got abroad. We felt greatly annoyed on account of the officers who had helped us at the Model School, and I have no doubt that until they read this they

will naturally think we betrayed them.

We had just missed a steamer to Durban, so we had to wait for the Konigen on Friday, April 6. During the days we remained in Portuguese territory we spent a great deal of time on board the British cruisers, five of which were in harbour, and from their officers we received a very warm welcome. On board the Forte Le Mesurier found an old schoolfellow, and I discovered that her commander, Captain C. H. Dundas, and I were Scotch cousins. I omitted to say that the day after reaching Lorenço Marques we were photographed, and again on the following day. On Friday night we left for Durban, there being on board Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, full of his Swaziland trip, and Sergeant Brockie, who had arrived the previous evening.

Le Mesurier and I parted at Pietermaritzburg — he to go round to the Free State with General Hunter's Division, I to rejoin my regiment at Ladysmith. I have not heard yet how he has fared; but during our tramp to the coal-mines I must have imbibed some fever-germs, for I have had two attacks of malarial fever. We have both obtained our desire—to get back to the front to duty — and as I write these words, and the end of the campaign seems near, I cannot help regretting deeply the wasted months of captivity, and try to console myself with the well-known couplet—

> "Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes,
> Some falls are means the happier to arise."

THE VALLEY OF ENCHANTMENT.

If the Romsdal has any European rival in stupendous, reckless grandeur, such is not known to me. Probably nowhere else, except in the Yosemite Valley, or in the gorges of the Indus above Khalsi in Ladak, shall you find opposing precipices of such height so near together. In Romsdal at its narrowest there is little question of gradient: there is scarcely room for anything but a sheer plunge of 6000 feet from the towering crests of the Troldtinder—the Witch Crags—on the west of the chasm, and from the pinnacle of Romsdalhorn on the east side thereof, if space is to be left for the imperious Rauma to roll its volume to the slumbering fiord. Far aloft, wherever there is a breach in the leagues of battlement, you may catch sight of the selvage of the great snowfield, parent of a thousand cascades: even at midsummer, snow loops every ledge and curtains every slope, down as far as the wooded river-banks; for if summer be bright here, it is passing brief, and one is not suffered to forget the long dark months when neither sun nor moon shines into Romsdal, only the cold stars.

Here and there, recessed between mountain bastions, is space of level meadow-land, deep with cool verdure, fringed with alder and rowan, birch and bird-cherry, and broidered with crimson orchis, russet sorrel, snowy buckbean, bluebells, purple geranium, lavender scabious, golden ranunculus and hawkweed. Elsewhere, slopes of *débris* run as a kind of *fausse braie* along the mighty rock curtain, clad with a gracious woodland, through which avalanches have driven many an avenue. Here is stored all manner of treasure for the botanist. Even if you have no patience for genera and species, you cannot fail to be struck by the contrast between the fragile and delicate beauty of the northern flora and the massive, gigantic features of the landscape which it adorns. You may revel here in profusion of such fastidious flowers as anxious amateurs at home coddle through a precarious existence among the grosser growths of the herbaceous border. Here are stately groups of purple larkspur and rosy willow-herb, close battalions of lily of the valley, with skirmishing companies of its modest cousin *Smilacina*. Here, too, the dainty *Trientalis* poises its solitary white star upon a thread-like stem above a girdle of wan leaves, and the wintergreen (*Pyrola*) rears sturdy little columns of waxy bells and pearly buds. The stonier places are spangled with the quaint blossoms of the dwarf cornel, each of them composed of four showy white bracts encircling a cushion of deep purple or puce florets. Pure

white also, but with golden centres, are the blossoms of that true forest nymph *Dryas octopetala*, which drapes the rocks with abundant foliage like miniature oak-leaves, but of deeper, glossier green. Here, also, a real thrill lies in wait for him who cares for the green things of the earth, yet who, like myself, has never before seen the tiny, trailing honeysuckle in its native sub-arctic haunts — the exquisite *Linnæa borealis*. It abounds in nooks among huge fallen boulders, rearing its twin roseate bells and twining its fairy garlands among juniper, bearberries, blaeberries, and oak and beech ferns. Its own loveliness apart, it commands a meed of special reverence from every disciple of the great Master, Linnæus, for upon this lowly herb he bestowed his own name, this he chose as his own emblem and united for ever with his own motto, *Tantus amor florum*—"So deep is my love of flowers." All these plants, it is true, save the larkspur, and many more that might be named, were not the patience of readers to be reckoned with, are still to be found in Britain; but they are children of solitude, and sorrier are the strips into which, year after year, British solitudes are gnawed by all-conquering industry and all-devouring tillage.

But I have not crossed the North Sea merely to prate of botany, nor yet with the loftier aim of one of my fellow-passengers in the steamer from Newcastle, who had come all the way from Australia to study astronomy in the land of the midnight sun. A certain wooden case, narrow, indeed, but more than six feet long, having caught his attention among my baggage, this gentleman took an early opportunity of expressing his delight that I had brought my telescope. "Telescope," quoth I; "I have nothing but these," showing him a pair of Zeiss lenses. His countenance fell. "Is not that a telescope in your long box?" he asked. I must have dropped leagues in his esteem when I had to confess it contained nothing more creditable than fishing-rods; for salmon-fishing was the grossly material object which was luring me into the Valley of Enchantment, and perhaps nowhere else can it be had of a higher quality.

Yet the best of it is confined to a very limited stretch in this fine river. For some six miles above the sea the Rauma sweeps in a series of majestic reaches having all outward semblance of noble salmon-casts, in volume somewhat equal to the Tay at the famed Linn o' Campsie. But for some occult reason the fish will not rest in these lordly lodges, or, resting, will not rise freely to the fly. They hurry up to the neighbourhood of the foss of Aarnhoe, which is placed exactly where the mountains upon either side of the valley approach each other most nearly. Scenery cannot be set forth in figures of measurement, yet some idea of the grandeur of this gorge may be conveyed by

repeating that, whereas each side thereof is formed by bare cliffs 6000 feet—*i.e.*, one mile and 240 yards—in height, and absolutely vertical in places for 1500 feet, the space separating their bases is less than half a mile. The foss itself is the result of the fall of a huge slice of the Troldtinder right across the valley, and the river roars and rages in white fury through and over the ruins of the mountain. How long ago this cataclysm took place passes human lore to record; but still you may see the vast chasm whence the mountain was torn from its roots, leaving a scar far lighter in colour to this day than the storm-stained surface of the remainder. Who knows whether of peaceful homesteads is here the sepulchre, or whether the fall happened before man had seized the lordship of the dale. Even now, hardly a day passes that the valley is not startled by a din, sharper than the roar of avalanche, and followed by a prolonged rattle as of musketry, as some mass of rock or cliff face topples over and falls for thousands of feet, leaving a dense column of dust in its track.

The aforesaid foss of Aarnhoe offers an effective barrier to the ascent of salmon until well on in summer, when most of the snow has melted and the river has fallen low; consequently the cream of the fishing in June and July is found in a couple of miles of water below the foss. It was a very late season when the busy little steamer from Molde set me down on a June afternoon at Veblungsnæs. The river was still rather too high for good sport, and, on arriving at my destination, a charming wooden house within sight of the foss of Aarnhoe, my host and hostess met me with the discouraging announcement that they had not stirred a fin that day. Now it was Saturday, and the Norseman's Sunday begins at 6 P.M. Already the hour-hand pointed to 5 o'clock; but, when offered the alternative of the tea-table or the riverside, who can doubt which I chose? It was my first visit to Norway, and every moment of a brief holiday should be well spent.

Striving, but surely in vain, to keep an appearance of polite indifference, I said I would like to have a look at the river, and forthwith began with trembling fingers and throbbing heart to unpack my kit. A river of renown in Norway is to the angler what High Leicestershire is to him who has never hunted save with provincial packs: to command success in either demands faultless equipment, for the odds are heavy that every point thereof will be tested to the utmost it will bear.

It boots not to describe the famous Rauma. Happy those, and they are many, who have seen and fished it: of those who have not done so, many must have drawn delight from the late Mr Bromley Davenport's narrative of encounters with mighty salmon therein. His book, tersely entitled 'Sport,' has long since been numbered among the choicest classics on the sportsman's shelves. Suffice it to say that the first thing which struck me on embarking

upon this stream was that Mr Davenport had by no means overcharged his picture. Fishermen and poets enjoy this in common, that they claim, and are universally accorded, exemption from the rigid shackles of mere veracity. "The angler," quoth an American cynic, "goeth forth in the morning, and returneth at night; the smell of whisky is upon him, but the truth is not in him." True it is that if one unacquainted with the craft were to form his estimate of salmon-fishing from the description thereof in sporting journals, he would pronounce it a pursuit fraught with extreme hazard of a watery grave, and to be accomplished only with almost superhuman exertion. The salmon must appear to him a creature endowed with the energy of a torpedo, leaping at times twelve feet into the air and running out such prodigious lengths of line with such exceeding swiftness that an incautious finger might easily be cut to the bone. But those who have fished much in British waters wot well that, although the noblest of fishes generally exhibits an agreeable degree of violence, it is exceedingly seldom that he takes out a hundred yards of line or leaves the pool in which he is hooked. In a river like the Rauma it is different. There he is not only described as doing such things, *but he is pretty sure to do them;* for the angler has to reckon with more than the strength, spirit, and dead-weight of his quarry: the volume and swiftness of the current count for a full half of the chances of combat, and occasions will arise when nothing less than 200 yards of line will serve to ensure success. This I was about to realise in the few minutes remaining before Sunday.

I have said that my first feeling was to acquit Mr Davenport of the amiable exaggeration which I had thought discernible in his description of the stream.

> "The field of battle is before me," he wrote, "white and tumultuous at the head, smooth and black in the middle, full of surging bubbles like the ebullitions of millions of soda-water bottles from the bottom, clear, swift, and transparent at the tail."

Here Mr Davenport was writing of the great pool below Aarnhoe foss, but only one epithet was amiss if applied to the pool of Tofte before me—"black." There was nothing approaching blackness: all was colour, delicate or intense. The deepest hues came from submerged rocks in mid-channel, which showed a soft purple through the superb sea-green depths. Clear, swift, and cold, the mighty river swept round the base of the towering Romsdalhorn,—so clear, that in the comparatively smooth water near the sides you might see every boulder, nay, every pebble and sand-rib, on the bottom, fifteen feet below; so swift, that it seemed scarcely fit resting-ground for any living creature; so cold, that, even on this sultry June evening, one could not envy the animal whose nose should be exposed to such a torrent flowing directly out of

glaciers and off snow-fields. Yes, it was indeed a melting evening in this high-walled gorge, whither, at midsummer, night cometh not at all and into which the sun pours for eight hours with radiance and heat intensified many-fold by refraction from leagues of bare cliff. It was only the approach of the Sabbath which justified putting a fly over the stream so early on such a broiling afternoon; for although the envious Troldtinder had shut the orb of day from sight at four o'clock, his radiance was still reflected with intense power from the upper half of the Horn, and angling is usually suspended till such time as 40,000 cabs and 10,000 carriages are bearing their freight to the myriad dinner-tables of London, and the Government Whips are exhausting all the arts of blandishment and menace to preserve a majority during the critical dinner-hour. From eight o'clock till midnight, and again from any hour you please till eight in the morning, is the usual fisherman's day in these latitudes; and, although the great height and nearness of the mountains east and west of the Rauma afford a more liberal margin of time, it is wise to take advantage in this very clear water of all the gloom you can get. By the bye, when is cockcrow during summer in Norway? Eggs appear regularly on the breakfast-table—at this moment I can hear the cackle of a successful hen; yet have I never heard chanticleer proclaim the morn, although I have been abroad at all hours.

But let me get on with my yarn. Norse fishermen show a philosophic indifference about the particular pattern of fly which may be used. About size they are reasonably solicitous: the lure must be large enough to be visible from great depths, yet not "very much big" to excite suspicion. In this respect they are laudably superior to our own gillies, and especially to Tweed boatmen, who tyrannise unmercifully and quite irresistibly in the matter of colour and material, prescribing silver for a cold day, black for a hot one, a "Wilkinson" for frost, and a "Kelly" for sunshine, with as confident dogma as if, like many another dogma, it were not a mere mask of ignorance and *a priori* speculation. So I was left entirely free to decide with what pattern I should essay my first enterprise in Norwegian waters. Happy are those whom, like myself, a profound scepticism delivers from the anguish of hesitancy and misgiving, and enables them to attach to the line a crimson and gold "Manchester Swell" with exactly the same degree of confidence as they would put up a sable and silver "Mar Lodge" or a polychrome "Popham." Indeed, if there be any guiding principle in this matter,—if salmon are gifted with the powers of discrimination with which some people credit them,—surely the aim of the angler should be to present them with something as different as possible from the lures with which they may have become familiar. Certainly upon this occasion I

could reckon upon no proved partiality on the part of the salmon I hoped to catch for the particular pattern which, coming first to hand, was chosen for the task, inasmuch as the like of it had never been seen upon the Rauma before. It was a purely local fly from the Cumberland Eden, reckoned there as "great medicine," and known as the "Bulldog"—though the reason is not exactly on the surface why a creature with a bright blue body, a silver tail, red hind-legs, and black and yellow wings, should bear that title. The only one that suggests itself is that it resembles a bulldog quite as closely as it does any known species in the insect world. What, after all, is there in a name? Those who have borne the part of lovers tell me that at times their feeling toward the object of their flame is so intense that it can only find expression in the ejaculation, "Well, you *are* a duck!"—an assertion which, taken literally, cannot be considered complimentary either to the figure, features, or mental attributes of the nymph.

By the time the "Bulldog" was ready for business it was half-past five, yet, just as Wellington defeated 40,000 Frenchmen in forty minutes at Salamanca, so, I felt, might laurels be won, or at least a fish landed, in half an hour. Presently the cock-nosed skiff bore me dancing over the waves; the boatman bid me cast into a rattling stream and bring the fly round into the comparative calm. I did so until six times; the seventh, or thereby, there was a slight commotion behind the Bulldog—so slight as might have escaped attention in the tumult, had I not caught sight of a fin above the surface, and felt a tiny twitch on the line. Nothing more. That fish may have been the 40-pounder in quest of which I have vainly squandered so many days, or he may have been but an impertinent grilse of 5 lb. A couple of inches of fin thirty yards away afford a very slender basis for computation. Vain were all attempts to wheedle him into a closer intimacy; a sunk fly and a jigging one, a fast fly and a slow one, all proved ineffective, and we floated on. Twenty yards lower down the line suddenly stopped; up went the rod, and I was fast in something solid. A rock? no, a delicious wobble told that the obstacle was alive, and presently the reel began to revolve, slowly at first—more swiftly—wildly at last, as the fish tore away to the distant shore. My reel held 120 yards of trusty line, but, as I stepped out of the boat, there was parlously little left upon the drum. Once ashore, however, and I could exert the utmost pressure. It is not always present to the angler's mind what that utmost amounts to. Good treble gut will stand a strain, say, of 8 or 10 lb. Pulling with a rod of eighteen feet, held at an angle of forty-five degrees, you *cannot break* such gut. How then does it happen that such gut sometimes *is* broken by a fish? Infallibly because one of two things has happened: either

the rod has been dragged or allowed to fall into something approaching straight with the line; or the fish has succeeded in getting a pull or making a leap against a fixed point between him and his would-be captor. Such a fixed point may be caused by the line getting foul of an obstacle under water, or by getting "drowned" —*i.e.*, when a great length of it bags deep and down-stream, and the fish runs up-stream and jumps.

The thing is easily proved. Hook your fly to a spring-balance in the hand of another: I'll give you a guinea if you can pull the index down to 4 lb. *with your rod*, and keep it there. Sandow himself could do no more; the law of dynamics (of which, *s'entend*, I am profoundly ignorant) is against it. Three or four pounds, therefore, is the maximum pressure any man can put on a fish with his rod, even though he feels that his own muscles are strained to their utmost; but 3 lb. rightly applied to a 20 or 30 lb. fish must win in the end, if the hook hold. But the pressure must be rightly applied. Stand with a fish down-stream and pull straight at him—you may spend half a day and be no nearer landing him; but make the pressure lateral—get opposite or below him—and you must pull him off his balance: he must leave his lodge and run for his life.

These tactics soon brought me on better terms with my maritime friend. The thin backing was all recovered; just as the first of the fifty yards of head-line was coming on the reel, a sudden thought seemed to strike him—"I'll be off to sea again." Away he went, this time not across but down stream: I could not follow him on foot, for the bank was fringed with alders; before I could take to my ship again he was in the swift water at the tail of the pool. Tostern bent to his oars and shot after him; then, poising his craft with her nose to the stream, allowed her to glide swiftly down after the fleeting fish through 150 yards of tossing rapids, till we floated upon the even surface of the next pool, Langholmen.

The battle was nearly won now: I could see my fish under the lucid wave—a pale-bluish phantom—and now the pale-blue turned to gleaming silver as he floated upon his side on the surface, beaten, and allowed me to tow him within reach of a sharp point and a steady hand, and at five minutes to six we weighed my first Norway salmon—21 lb.

Let not the fisher fagged with unfruitful toil in some Scottish stream imagine that it is always this simple *venio, video, vinco* business in Norwegian waters. Salmon in these are just the same capricious, inconstant, unaccountable creatures that they are elsewhere; subject to similar simultaneous moods of inertness, of indifference to all lures, or, again, of watchful curiosity, ready to seize the first thing moving near them. As a rule, the fisherman is like the sun-dial—*horas non numerat nisi serenas*. He is discreetly silent about the countless hours he

squanders vainly flogging the flood.

Let me give as examples my experience of two typical days in the present year of grace 1900. The first was on the last day of February, in that region of Scotland which partakes more of Scandinavian character than any other, and *was* actually part of the kingdom of Norway till the end of the twelfth century — the counties of Caithness and Sutherland. There the people, though infused with a measure of Celtic recklessness and Saxon gruffness, are mainly of Scandinavian blood and temperament; there the land-names are chiefly in the old Norse language; there, too, the sun of summer succeeds in banishing night almost as effectively as in Norway itself. Brief in proportion are the winter days; even at the end of February, within a month of the equinox, a full hour of daylight is filched by the envious shades more than in the latitude of London. Wherefore it behoves him who would do justice to his luck to be astir betimes, and it was that feeling which took me to my beat that morning on the Helmsdale before a forbidding rime-frost had risen off the land. The Helmsdale has much the character of a Norse river, rolling swift and strong so long as the snow-field lasts; dwindling to insignificance when that is exhausted. It bears the name given to its strath by the Norse conquerors — Helmsdale — the old Gaelic title being Amhuin and Strath Ullie.

Well, I began operations in the frost, and in the first passage down the pool three fish came to the fly, but not one would take hold. About ten o'clock the sun came over the shoulder of the Ord; the unkindly cold fled before it, and straightway ensued a phenomenon, the like of which I have never seen before. Eleven spring salmon rose in succession, each one went as near swallowing a large "snow-fly" as he could, and each one paid the penalty of death for his curiosity.

Now set against that the experience of this very day on which I scribble these desultory lines. It is in Romsdal, at the very cream of the season—the first week in July. A week of cold wet weather, accounted very unfavourable for sport, has just passed away, during which we got fish daily, and good ones too. The oracle of the river —the excellent old boatman Tostern—bade us wait till the river fell within certain marks and the weather became "a little much warm." Well, yesterday the wind went to the south, the sun shone forth, salmon were plunging in every stream, the river was pronounced to be in perfect trim, all boded for the best; yet last night from six o'clock till ten, this morning from six o'clock till nine, three rods have been plied, and all the choicest confections of Farlow and Jamie Wright displayed in vain; and not a single fish hangs in the larder. Great salmon rolled and bounced and rose in that seductive "head-and-tail" fashion close round our flies,

but sorrow a one could we induce to lay hold.

While, then, the flavour of Scandinavian sport is heightened by a due share of uncertainty—an element so essential to excitement—assuredly there is no lack of that other palliative of cloying—danger. Not risk of life or limb: after a man's tenth lustre has been added to the irrevocable, he ceases to hanker much after that; but hazard of losing a good fish after hooking it. There are places in the Rauma, seductive lodges in the foss of Fiva (a couple of miles lower down than the foss of Aarnhoe), where you may easily tempt a heavy salmon to the fly, thereby only courting almost inevitable disaster. Other places there are,—the stream of Lærnesset, for example, just above the said foss,—where, at a certain height of water, the odds are about three to two in favour of raising and hooking a fish, and about five to three against landing him. The river, reuniting at this point after dalliance round some islands, swoops in a swift curve upon a sharp incline, and shoots down into the roaring foss. Once fast in a fish, there is only one chance of bringing him to the gaff—namely, to steer him into a bay or backwater by sidelong pressure of strong tackle: if he runs or is swept past that haven, then there is nothing else for it but to hold on and wait till something breaks, either the weakest link in the gear or the hold of the hook, because follow him you cannot down these rapids, rocks and trees barring the way. Certainly the amateur in adventure cannot do better than cast his angle in such a place as Lærnesset, but mishap may befall the least ambitious in other pools.

The river had fallen fully eighteen inches since my arrival a week before, when, one evening lately, I embarked upon the pool below the foss of Aarnhoe—the same wherein Mr Davenport hooked his 43-pounder, which yielded not its life till it had run down more than a mile of river. Classic ground, yet not of the sort to daunt the hopes of facile conquest, for there is ample sea-room within this splendid pool to exhaust the most powerful salmon. Several times during the week I had seen a fish rise here of very stately proportions, anywhere between 30 and 40 lb. in weight, but hitherto he had refused all invitations to closer acquaintance. A strong tug beside the "soda-water" near the top sent my heart into my mouth; yet this was not the big fellow, but a lively one of 14 lb., which in ten minutes lay safely on the silver strand, and we pushed off on a second venture. Halfway down the tossing stream, which circles swiftly under the left bank, a fine bold rise tightened the line with a snap, and was followed by a dogged series of digs, as the salmon sailed deep and slow right up into the very neck of the strong water. He felt like something big; but all I had seen was half a yard of arched back when he rose,—the rest was pure specula-

tion of the sort which experience comes so often to dispel. My fish spent the first five minutes marking time; not sulking, but dodging in a leisurely way among the submerged boulders at the foot of the foss, resisting all the strain I could put upon fine treble gut. Suddenly he changed his tactics: I could almost hear him exclaim in horror, "By Thor and Odin! this must be a hook." Turning sharp, he fled past me, down, down, down, at great speed, to the very foot of the pool, whence turning again he dashed at a tangent to the far bank, and walloped on the surface. Still I could not make out his proportions, though the boatman muttered "Big fish."

Thus the battle wore on, so long that I hoped his force would not avail to let him seek another field; but the hope was vain. Several times in his rushes he had scoured round the very verge where the pool rolls out into a long rough rapid; a last excursion carried him over the verge, and down I felt he must go. Landing with all speed, I prepared for the crisis of the struggle. Fully 100 yards of line were off the reel already, but I had taken the precaution to add enough backing to give me 200 yards. Fast as I could follow over a waste of boulders, the current bore the fish still faster, and the line was running out by leaps and bounds. The extreme danger at this place consists in the nature of the channel. The bulk of water, leaping and tumbling in grand breakers, rushes down under the cliffs on the left bank. I was on the right bank, separated from my fish by a labyrinth of side-channels, winding among huge rocks. If the line could be lifted clear of all these, safety might be gained in the great pool of Langhol, 100 yards below; but it is not easy so to handle a great length of line. One hundred and fifty yards were out by this time; but I had got abreast of the fish, and the worst dangers were past. Deep was the sigh of relief I breathed as we reached the neck of Langhol and began recovering line. A rolling and kicking movement proclaimed that my communications had not been cut, and now all was plain sailing. "Really," methought, "I managed that difficult passage rather nicely. There is some credit in killing a fish of this kind. It is not every duffer who——"

"WHAT'S THAT? what the deuce is *that?*"

The line had stopped. I tried to persuade myself it had not; there—I feel the fish! No, it was but the rush of the stream on the bight of the line. It had stopped, and no mistake, wrapped round a hateful boulder in the very portals of success. I pulled up—down—across—all to no purpose. Finally a boat had to be brought up, the line was freed, and wound sadly in, *minus* the fly and a yard of treble gut.

"What size do you put him at?" Oh, don't ask me! I saw nothing of him but the half-yard of back in the rise: he may have been as big as they make them; but, on the other hand, he may have been

but an 18-pounder hooked foul. We only learnt by meeting, that fish and I, how bitter it was to part (to one of us, at least); but the remembrance would be incomparably unbearable were I certain that he was a really big fish, for such chances come not every season to any angler—to many anglers not once in a life-time.

What makes the tussle with a Norwegian salmon so much fiercer and longer than one in Scottish waters? Some will tell you that the nearer you approach the Pole the greater you will find the vigour of all *Salmonidæ*. Certainly this is borne out within the limits of our own little island, as those will testify who have compared the strength of a 2-lb. trout in a Hampshire stream with one of like weight hooked from the shore of a Highland loch. Have you nerve and delicacy of touch to control the first rush of the English fish? the rest is child's play; but the Highlander will fight hard to the last gasp. But the chief advantage enjoyed by the Norwegian salmon in his fight with man lies in the force of the stream. You can fish these clear Scandinavian torrents when they are in such spate as would render most Scottish rivers quite unfishable. Hook a log in such a stream, and you will realise that a big salmon has only to turn his side against the current to become nearly unmanageable. Your art consists in pulling him off his balance over and over again till he is beaten.

Rude must have been the schooling of the pioneers of salmon-angling in Norway. Frightful must have been the disasters encountered by him who first cast a fly in such a river as this, using a shallow, long-barrelled reel, such as Scrope depicts in his inimitable 'Days and Nights of Tweed Fishing'; when trees grew thickly along the banks, and no friendly hand had as yet cast foot-bridges over yawning rock-chasms!

For salmon-fishing above other field-sports one immense, one signal merit may be claimed — it inflicts no unnecessary suffering and leaves no sting of remorse. A salmon taken by the fly, wounded only in the gristle or membranes of the mouth, feels no more pain than one taken in a net—the pain inseparable from terror. If he escapes from the hook, or even with the hook, he is none the worse, or at all events suffers no more than trifling discomfort. I possess to this day a certain double-hooked fly of which a salmon deprived me many, many years ago in the North Tyne. Two days later, a friend of mine, fishing half a mile higher up the river, proved how little inconvenience I had caused this fish by recovering my fly in the breast of a 17-pounder which he landed on a fly of much the same character. I attached my own fly at once to the line, and caught a couple of salmon with it on the same evening.

Other field-sports do not always leave the conscience cloudless. "The place where the old horse died" is perhaps one of more than merely tender

association. Well for you if you have not to reproach yourself for having exacted too much from your generous comrade and servant, who never measured his effort by his power. Fine, too, are the trophies of the big-game hunter; but, in winning them, how many noble creatures has he dismissed to a lingering death in the wilderness. I have never had to lament the death of a horse under me; but in all my memories of moor and river, mountain and vale, there is none I care so little to revive as that of a certain afternoon on the steep above Loch Treig. We were stalking, on very difficult ground, a small herd of deer which got our wind and moved off before we were so near as we had wished. Among them were two good stags, one of which fell to my first barrel, apparently stone-dead; his comrade was heavily struck with the second. I felt some satisfaction with the performance, for they were both longish running shots; but just as I was starting in pursuit of the cripple, the first stag rose to his feet and began hobbling away in the opposite direction. Handing my rifle to the stalker, I bade him go and finish off the second beast, while I kept watch upon the first. Donald took longer over the job than we had expected: he was absent more than an hour, during which time through my glass I watched the first stag, desperately wounded in the body, creeping along the hillside, lying down from time to time to ease his agony. At last he passed round the flank of the hill out of my sight. Still, I felt sure of getting him; and when at last Donald returned, his dog with alacrity took up the trail, which was marked, besides, with blood. How many miles we followed it, I cannot tell; but in the end a storm came on with thick mist, and we lost the trail altogether on a wind-swept waste of stones. This happened several seasons ago, yet still my heart aches when I shut my eyes and see that lonely beast on the great brown hill, dismissed to a slow, solitary death. To the salmon-fisher can come no such bitter after-thoughts.

Of such sort are the meditations which pass through my mind in this Valley of Enchantment as I bask in the glorious sunshine between the early and late fishing. There is no sound, save the roar of the foss, never-ceasing for thousands of years, and the shrill scolding of a pair of fieldfares trying to drive off a marauding magpie from their brood among the alders. Of the lives of the simple, kindly folk who dwell in the wide-scattered wooden houses in this dale I have said no word, for how much can we realise of their lives, we holiday-makers, who come later than the cuckoo and fritillary and are gone before the goatsuckers? How do they pass those months of darkness when the snow piles deeper and deeper under the cold stars? The men, it is said, go to the North Sea fishing, a dreadful toil which may well serve as their

excuse for dawdling through the sweet o' the year. Substantial yeomen, many of them, they own land which might be better tilled. Especially do they neglect the pleasure and profit to be had from gardens. Here no carnations toss from window-boxes their perfume, so grateful to the traveller in the Alps; no roses cluster round the doors nor pansies in the plots. The culture of pot-herbs and small fruits is almost entirely neglected, albeit these grow abundantly and ripen fast under the long sunlit hours and refreshing showers, and would be eagerly bought by those English visitors who are at pains to import bottled pease and asparagus. Wild strawberries of exquisite flavour positively ripen while you wait. There are plenty of wild bees, and good clover in the meadows, yet have I not seen a single beehive in Romsdal. The farmers seem to have no ambition beyond scratching up an annual break in amateurish fashion with rude wooden ploughs, drawn by the sleek *khaki* ponies which they treat so tenderly; but on some of these patches the wheat does not promise to return more than the seed, with a little over for the poultry. Haymaking, indeed, is a more serious matter, begun, continued, and ended in feverish haste, before the sun deserts the dale. Some of the grass is subjected to a kind of "kippering" process on hurdles, but nobody seems to have suggested the application of the silo system, peculiarly adapted for dealing with the abundant lush herbage.

Poor and hard although their lives may be, these sweet-tempered folk seem entirely contented with them as they are. It is difficult to realise that they are the children of that race which, for three centuries, was chiefly dreaded by the people of Britain — of those restless, ruthless Vikings who cut the throats of Columba's monks, harried our coasts from Chichester to Caithness, from Chester to the Clyde, and drove with dripping swords and flaming brands through the Christian settlements of Ireland. In one virtue these modern Norsemen excel almost every other Christian race. Only among Mohammedans can be found such gentle consideration for, such affectionate treatment of, beasts of burden and of draught. The stages are often long and steep; but it adds vastly to the traveller's enjoyment that the mild, intelligent eyes of the good dun ponies, disfigured by no blinkers, are never strained in distress or terror. No blows, no sore backs, no harsh tones, disturb the perfect confidence between man and beast. Even the lazy ones respond generously to a cheering cry or a signal from the hand, and the high-spirited ones obey a warning that conveys no suggestion of rebuke. Chiefly this is owing to the good-nature and sweet temper of the drivers and horse-owners; it may be left to speculation how far these qualities, here, as in Mohammedan lands, are owing to the absence of public-houses and the universal sobriety of the people. Certainly,

fifty per cent of the abuse of horses in our own country may be traced to bad liquor and too much of it.

One thing let me beg the angler bound for Norway not to forget. In these far-winding dales there are many children, but no sweet-shops. Let him therefore reserve an ample corner in his tackle-box for toothsome delicacies: he will find his reward in watching the effect upon palates which have never before experienced the exquisite sensation caused by chocolate and butter-scotch, and every little gift of this nature will be acknowledged by a diminutive brown paw held out, not for more, but to shake hands in gratitude to the donor.

Adieu! terrible, beautiful Romsdal. Though I should never visit you again, often shall I see your towering crests, your mountain-walls, your hanging pine-woods, glimmering birch-glades, and flower-spangled meads — often hear your falling floods and roar of avalanche — often muse upon your gentle, warm-hearted people and solitary homes. Often, too, in my dreams shall I feel the masterful snatch of a great salmon at the fly, hear the screeching reel as he turns his silver side to the torrent, and fancy myself returning through the dewy glades at midnight, what time the woodcocks flit darkling to their favourite swamp.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

AFTER WILD GEESE IN MANITOBA.

A CANADIAN spring can be more changeable than an English summer. A month ago the ice had broken up in the river, the sun was scorching the wooden side-walks, and the geese on their northward flight were making night hideous with their marching songs. The red gods were calling insistently, and three of us rolled up our blankets, packed our gun-cases and cartridge magazines, and started for one of the great lakes in pursuit.

A couple of hours in a hot railway-car, an eight-mile drive through choking dust, and then the wind went round to the north, and we were glad to light the stove in the wooden shanty where we were to camp, and to drink tea, boiling, before we left for our shooting-ground. For a mile we splashed through the swamp, with water up to our knees, and, underneath, a hard floor of solid ice as firm and unyielding as marble, till suddenly through a fringe of bush we came out on the shores of a great frozen sea. Far away to the sky-line stretched the white desolate plain, sparkling and coruscating with gems innumerable, and still and silent as death. Two of us hid in the bush, and the third went back to the swamp to "skirmish around" and try to stir up the ducks, while a thin spiral column of distant smoke from an Indian camp-fire was the only indication of human life we could see.

B-r-r-r-r! but it was cold! I was dressed in corduroy with a thick woollen jersey between coat and waistcoat, and the cutting wind, fresh from its clear sweep over those leagues of snow, seemed to search me through and through like a Röntgen ray. The other two men were better off, for they had invaded a small country store and carried off the last two pea-jackets in stock—the very thing for wildfowl-shooting at this time of year. These garments are about the length of an ordinary covert-coat, and made in three layers; the outside being khaki-coloured canvas, followed by a stratum of rubber like an ordinary black mackintosh, and an inner lining of thick tweed. When you have fitted this up with a corduroy collar deep enough to turn up over your ears, and knitted wristbands which fasten close round your gloves, you have a garment that is rain-proof and wind-proof and cold-proof.

We waited there an hour, hearing an occasional shot from the swamp, and seeing, once in a while, a small flock of duck overhead, too high to shoot; and then the sun sank low in the heaven, while the dazzling white expanse before me was sullied over with a flush of delicate rose, and on my left a blue-black line of trees stood out sharp and distant against the vaporous mother-of-pearl of the western sky. Then the sun went down, and far away to

the north I could hear the shrill unearthly cries of the great divers, and of whooping-cranes —the wail of banshees, and Valkyries, and the baying of Gabriel's hounds.

If the geese had been flying as they ought, I should have missed it all, I suppose, and if it had not been so piercingly cold I should have appreciated it. As it was, we were not sorry to turn home, shivering and hungry enough to steal the dog-biscuits from the big English retriever, whose coat is so thick and curly that his master has to pat him with a canoe paddle as a mark of approbation.

Next morning we harnessed the two rough Indian ponies, loaded up our box of painted sheet-iron decoys, and drove out on a voyage of discovery to find a suitable spot for planting them. Our main difficulty lay in the fact that, since the sudden dip in the thermometer, it was impossible to detect where those geese went to feed. We saw plenty of them, but they were always flying at about three times the height of the Eddystone lighthouse, and apparently going nowhere in particular. When we did select a spot and began to dig our hides, we struck solid ice at a depth of a couple of feet, and slowly the conviction began to dawn on us that we were too early in the season for a successful shoot. Still, we did the best we could, and leaving our decoys, with the hope that, if they served no other purpose, they might tempt some unwary sportsman into a long and arduous stalk, we departed for a stroll to the spot where we intend to build the ideal shooting-lodge of the great North-West one of these days.

Past the Indian encampment, where the squaws peered at us curiously and the bucks discouraged us by saying that the geese were scarce this spring, while the papooses sat by the fire and whittled blunt-headed arrows; skirting the great swamp that is all cut up into canals fringed with tall reeds, where you can shoot ducks in the fall from a canoe as you shoot pheasants in the rides through an English covert; over the marshy field that today is hard enough to walk on, but in September will be squashy, and cattle-poached, and alive with snipe; and then on to higher land, where last year's hay has been set alight for a square mile or two, and all the surface of the ground is a crackling "beard of fire."

Through a small belt of trees, and suddenly we might be in the midland counties. The farmhouse is as snug, and nearly as solid, as an English homestead; the wide champaign country that stretches away in front sets a man's fingers tingling when he bethinks him of how hounds would fly over it with a good scent; the buildings are substantial and well kept; and the owner of it all, hospitable, cheery, and as keen a sportsman as you want to meet. Then back to our shack, where we smoke and try to read novels till we feel compelled to be out of doors again, and practise shooting at empty bottles in the creek with

a rook-rifle until the evening flight begins.

At five o'clock we are back at our hides, and by carefully collecting sedge and hay and dead thorns, we manage to build an ambush that would probably deceive certain British officers, though we are a little doubtful about the geese. Indeed the best way to delude them is to dig deep (which we are debarred from doing on account of the frost), and to dump the earth on a tarpaulin, which you drag over the stubble so as to scatter everything, and leave no surface indications of what you have been doing. An hour and a half in a cramped position, with your chin in close proximity to your knees, is not calculated to steady your aim; but you forget all that when the distant "honk-honk" suddenly strikes your ears, and you spring to attention and strain your eyes into blue distance. "They're high up" mutters the next gun, and then you catch sight of the black triangle that is moving so much faster than you think, and you crouch close with your finger on the trigger. Suddenly they see the decoys and set their wings, dropping slowly in ever-narrowing circles, and calling fitfully to their irresponsive friends below. Down they come, nearer and nearer, till at last they make up their minds and take a final low sweep into the wind. Three barrels ring out simultaneously, followed quickly by two more, and three geese drop fluttering to the ground. There is a quick startled up-rushing of wings, and the main flock is off at double the speed of an express train—except one who leaves his companions and flies away low at right angles, evidently hard hit. A little later we get a couple more, and then—our chances for the day being over—we leave our hides in quest of the wounded bird. We hunt him for nearly half a mile, till he rises again from a bunch of reeds near the swamp and drops to the first barrel. And then home, not dissatisfied on the whole, but still sure that we shall have a better chance a week or so later.

That night the wind blew a gale from the north, and whistled through the thin planks of our shack, finding its way between the blankets, and making us pull the buffalo robes close round our necks. About three o'clock we wake up and discuss the situation: whether it is worth while to take an hour's walk in the dark, and stand another hour in a new-made grave, exposed to this cutting wind, on the very problematic chance of getting another shot or two? Reluctantly we rise, get into our fur-coats, and open the door and step out. It is a wild night; the creek, which yesterday was running freely at our feet, is skimmed over with a coating of ice, the clouds are racing across the moon, and a slight flurry of snow looks as if it might develop into a blizzard ere daybreak. So we look at one another till the man with the most moral courage of the three says decidedly, "I'm going back to

bed," and in five minutes we are all asleep again.

Only a week later, and summer has returned. A telephone message calls me over to a friend's house in the evening, and a glance at the smoking-room tells me the reason of the summons. He is seated in a chair with a brand-new gun-case, fresh from Bond Street, at his feet, and is fondly caressing the dark gleaming barrels; the floor is littered with strips of white cotton, and the sewing-machine is angrily working overtime in the corner. All his womenkind have been commandeered to make decoys; for the snow geese, or "waveys" as they are locally called (from the Indian *wa-wa*, pronounced way-way — see "Hiawatha" *passim*), are reported to have arrived in their thousands. These birds are more easily beguiled than their grey cousins, the Canadian geese, and will even come down to pocket handkerchiefs artfully propped up on sticks, though we treat them with more respect, and are stitching together ridiculous-looking bags, cut into the shape of the natural bird. Their necks, I am informed, are padded with sawdust, or cork shavings, "the stuff they pack grapes in." There is a slit left in the middle of the belly, and when you get on to your ground you fill your bird up with hay, and at a few yards' distance he looks lifelike.

With some fifty or sixty of these we leave the next day for a new district altogether, whither a friendly farmer has called us by telegram—for the wavey is a capricious bird, and his stay in any one locality at this time of year is uncertain. We drive fifteen miles, after leaving the railway-station, before choosing a suitable spot for pitching our tent, and then camp near a lonely farmhouse about three miles from a vast swamp, and as near as we can guess to the line of flight. Our first evening is spent in selecting the place for our hides,—digging them, which is hard work when the spade strikes solid ice at a depth of three feet; and stuffing our decoys with hay from the farmer's rick. Next morning we are up before daybreak, and endeavouring to make our ambush a little more artistic by strewing around dried sticks and dead leaves, and what a certain small girl, with an extraordinary apprehension of the *mot juste*, once called "grubbage." It is a little cool before the sun is up, and our *chota hazri*, which consisted of buns washed down by a mixture of soda-water and ginger-ale from a tin cup, is filling but not warming. But once the day breaks the temperature rises quickly, and an absurd mosquito even has the impudence to buzz round me, though he is not yet sophisticated enough to make an actual attack. The man next to me is reading a novel to prevent him from "brooding over a misspent life," as he explains, and the man beyond is eating an orange and throwing the peel impartially at the other two. And then, almost before we know it, a flock of two or

three hundred is almost on the top of us. We are cowering down in our hides in an instant, and the great birds are circling lower and lower, with the sun flashing on their snow-white wings, fluttering and swooping in stately curves "like the angels in the last scene in 'Faust,'" as I heard a Canadian girl say. She, I may remark, knows what it is to be up at unholy hours in the morning, and can hold a gun straight, and counts sunburn as naught in comparison with a good bag. When we return to breakfast we have more birds than we can carry in one trip, and an appetite that eggs and bacon, cooked in the farm-kitchen, do not seem sensibly to affect. There is a girl, by the way, at this farm, who looks like Mrs Langtry must have done at eighteen, and who offers to help us to wash our plates and dishes. Usually this operation is abhorred by men in camp, and any excuse is seized on to defer it till the last moment, or to pass it off on some one else. But on this occasion we all develop a startling eagerness to undertake the work, and to make a thorough job of it; while Mrs Langtry's understudy superintends with much laughter, and her small brothers gratefully devour the stock of chocolate which we always carry on a shooting trip.

From the big lagoons in the distance we hear the constant fusilade of a party of unprincipled half-breeds, who are poking about in canoes, and shooting at ducks, and we mentally anathematise the whole outfit, "*canots, canards, canaille.*" For the ducks have begun to pair by now, and are very wild, and the firing scares them; and even though more birds are pricked than are actually killed, still they will be infertile for this season at all events; and, finally, all shooting of ducks in the spring should be rigorously prohibited.

About five o'clock we return to our lairs. These have been dug along the boundary-line between two wheat-fields, where in England there would be a hedge; but here there is simply a line of short scrub, a narrow strip of virgin prairie. The young wheat is beginning to thrust up its bladelets of bright green, in vivid contrast to the sun-baked soil. At home you would be praying for rain after such a prolonged drought as we have had; but the same frost that turns the edge of our spades in digging is thawing slowly out, and keeps the roots moist and fresh. I have just settled down comfortably with my cartridges handy at my feet, my gun alongside, and a mildly exciting novel to pass the time, when some one calls out, "Look what's coming!" and there—right in front of us—a huge dust-storm, that darkens the whole horizon, is racing down like a hurricane. In a few seconds it is on us, and our decoys are throwing back somersaults towards the swamp at a rate of ten or fifteen miles an hour. They are, quite literally, turning heels over head backwards, and getting rid of their stuffing

with acrobatic rapidity. Out we scramble after them, and the race that ensues would make even us laugh, if it were possible to open one's mouth without getting it full of grit: every time I stoop to make a dive at a ricochetting goose my eyes are blinded, and at last I trip and lose a whole armful of the wretched birds. Then I sit down helplessly, and try to recall some remarks I once heard from a mounted policeman, during a lurid interval when our whipple-trees broke in fording a river. When we finally round them all up, we agree that they are the most tired-looking flock of geese we ever saw: their heads and necks hang helplessly to one side, some of them are too lean to stand upright, others plump in the wrong places, and all present an appearance of hopeless depravity.

My novel bores me, and I drop it on my knee and begin to dream of the day—not very distant, I hope—when there will be one or two English cavalry regiments regularly quartered somewhere on these vast prairies, doing mounted police work, and learning some of the lessons that cannot be taught by drill-sergeants. Send them out in detachments, let them carry their own food, and find their own way from Regina to Edmonton, say, without using the railway. If the British private stays out too late at night in a garrison town, he is punished by a few days' C.B.; but if he loses his way and fails to strike camp out here, he will go supperless to bed, and in the winter will stand a fair chance of freezing to death. Wherefore he bethinks him of the points of the compass, and the direction in which the wind was blowing at eleven o'clock in the morning, and he watches to see whether a bird will swerve in its flight from those dark objects in the distance, and learns several other lessons, on a due knowledge of which may depend, some day, the fate of himself, or a regiment, or an entire army. The penalties that Nature inflicts for errors of omission or commission are swifter and more obvious than those of Civilisation—there is very little jam with your powder in the colonies. I have heard it maintained that Englishmen of the wealthier class have mastered the "art of living" better than any other nation under the sun. Of living easily, perhaps; but not of strenuous life, that must be learnt by experience, by storm and stress, and toil and hardship. One reason why Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam, Viscount St Alban, could not have written Shakespeare's plays is, that he never had occasion to hold horses outside the Globe Theatre. The code of honour that is instilled into an English gentleman at the public school and the 'Varsity is a high one, and he may not swerve from it by one jot or one tittle and keep his self-respect. But he will be a wiser though perhaps not a better man, when he has learnt that many there be who disregard it altogether, and more who will stand aloof and watch, with a

half-amused smile, the deliberate misuse of the white flag. The men who sit at home at ease, and elaborate rules of conduct in an arm-chair at a study table, do not realise how young the old world really is, and how primitive the passions that sway it. The days of universal peace, and the final triumph of the industrial *régime*, are still very far off; and some of the counsels of perfection that used to seem so conclusive and unanswerable now provoke a smile—they are so irresistibly suggestive of Mrs Sarah Battle teaching a man how to play poker in a mining camp. How clearly you see the trees fringing that river-bank a couple of miles away; and how cool the water looks on the sunburnt prairie! And yet there is no river — only a mirage, and . . .

Waveys! and all my moralising is blown to the winds, as I squirm over close to the dry black earth, and slip the cartridges into my gun. "I'm afraid they're too high to decoy," whispers the next man, and I twist over on my back, and stare straight above me. Here they come in hundreds, if not in thousands, string after string, flung out far across the zenith, so many of them that they seem to have got confused and forgotten their drill, for they are flying in all sorts of formations, from the blunt arrow-head to the Egyptian cartouche: once they have managed to break all rules, and are moving in an almost perfect circle. There are too many of them and they are too high up to deign to stoop to the decoys; but the sight alone is worth coming out here to see, and you hug yourself in silent ecstasy as the great host passes overhead. The clamour and clang of them is like marching music, and fills you with a strange yearning to follow the wild triumphal flight to its summer home in the Arctic Circle.

A little later and another army passes over in the same way, and then, after an interval, a small belated "gaggle," who are evidently hungry for their supper, and promptly accept the insidious invitation offered by the dilapidated dummies in front of us, who appear to be reeling home from a prolonged debauch. They sink suddenly, with much angry cackling, till they are almost on the ground within a dozen yards of us, and then whirl together, with a rattling of pinions, and speed out of sight, leaving five of their number behind to pay the penalty of unpunctuality.

Then we collect our spoil, and pick out the most consumptive-looking of the decoys to carry home, so that we may stuff their ribs with fresh hay, and start for camp and supper.

There is no medicine in the world like this fresh prairie air, stimulating as dry champagne, and we sit round an artfully constructed packing-case and devour bacon and boiled eggs, using cartridge-boxes with holes punched in the lid for egg-cups, and throwing the shells at the irate old turkey gobbler, who is perched up on an empty waggon, and swearing vigorously at us

for keeping him awake. Then we carry our dinner-service to the farm-kitchen, where the whole family is assembled, and talk and smoke and wash up. For real, genuine hospitality, that which is at ease itself and sets the guest at ease too, you have to visit the highest types of barbarians—great gentlemen *de par le monde*, or dwellers in the wilderness. These people chatted of themselves and their doings with perfect simplicity and kindness; and our host proudly produced his best gun, which must have weighed some 20 lb., explaining that he had sawn a foot or so off the barrel to enable him to use it from the shoulder, and told us how he had first loaded it with a cartridge-case full of old black powder that had been put away on a shelf for years, and what execution it had done at twenty yards, and how—thinking to improve on this—he had bought a new nitro-powder in the nearest town, with the result that he upset his canoe, and nearly drowned his companion, and was unable to use his right arm for over two weeks. And the children listened round-eyed, till they were summarily carried off to be washed and put to bed.

Next day we returned to civilisation and railway-stations, hearing, as was inevitable, that if we had chosen any other camping-ground in the province we should have counted our slain by hundreds, and that the local Nimrod had passed through the previous day with a stack of geese as big as a barn, and ducks innumerable. But we have had a long acquaintance with that local Nimrod, and know that he hath a nimble fancy, and can lie like Othello when occasion rises, so that we pay small heed to the tale of his exploits, and bury ourselves in the newspaper to learn what is going on in South Africa. Then home, where the guns are put away, sadly and tenderly, until next September.

C. HANBURY-WILLIAMS.

LORD JIM: A SKETCH.[1]

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"YOU may imagine with what interest I listened. All these details were perceived to have some significance twenty-four hours later. In the morning Cornelius made no allusion to the events of the night. 'I suppose you will come back to my poor house,' he muttered surlily, slinking up just as Jim was entering the canoe to go over to Doramin's *campong*. Jim only nodded, without looking at him. 'You find it good fun, no doubt,' muttered the other in a sour tone. Jim spent the day with the old *nakhoda*, preaching the necessity of vigorous action to the principal men of the Bugis community, who had been summoned for a big talk. He remembered with pleasure how very eloquent and persuasive he had been. 'I managed to put some backbone into them that time, and no mistake,' he said. Sherif Ali's last raid had swept the outskirts of the settlement, and some women belonging to the town had been carried off to the stockade. Sherif Ali's emissaries had been seen in the market-place the day before, strutting about haughtily in white cloaks, and boasting of the Rajah's friendship for their master. One of them stood forward in the shade of a tree, and, leaning on the long barrel of a rifle, exhorted the people to prayer and repentance, advising them to kill all the strangers in their midst, some of whom, he said, were infidels and others even worse—children of Satan in the guise of Moslems. It was reported that several of the Rajah's people amongst the listeners had loudly expressed their approbation. The terror amongst the common people was intense. Jim, immensely pleased with his day's work, crossed the river again before sunset.

"As he had got the Bugis irretrievably committed to action, and had made himself responsible for success on his own head, he was so elated that in the lightness of his heart he absolutely tried to be civil with Cornelius. But Cornelius became wildly jovial in response, and it was almost more than he could stand, he says, to hear his little squeaks of false laughter, to see him wriggle and blink, and suddenly catch hold of his chin and crouch low over the table with a distracted stare. The girl did not show herself, and Jim retired early. When he rose to say good-night, Cornelius jumped up, knocking his chair over, and ducked out of sight

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as if to pick up something he had dropped. His good night came huskily from under the table. Jim was amazed to see him emerge out with a dropping jaw, and staring, stupidly frightened eyes. He clutched the edge of the table. 'What's the matter? Are you unwell?' asked Jim. 'Yes, yes, yes. A great colic in my stomach,' says the other; and it is Jim's opinion that it was perfectly true. If so, it was, in view of his contemplated action, an abject sign of a still imperfect callousness for which he must be given all due credit.

"Be it as it may, Jim's slumbers were disturbed by a dream of heavens like brass resounding with a great voice, which called upon him to Awake! Awake! so loud that, notwithstanding his desperate determination to sleep on, he did wake up in reality. The glare of a red spluttering conflagration going on in mid-air fell on his eyes. Coils of black thick smoke curved round the head of some apparition, some unearthly being, all in white, with a severe, drawn, anxious face. After a second or so he recognised the girl. She was holding a dammar torch at arm's-length aloft, and in a persistent, urgent monotone she was repeating, 'Get up! Get up! Get up!'

"Suddenly he leaped to his feet; at once she put into his hand a revolver, his own revolver, which had been hanging on a nail, but loaded this time. He gripped it in silence, bewildered, blinking in the light. He wondered what he could do for her.

"She asked rapidly and very low, 'Can you face four men with this?' He laughed while narrating this part at the recollection of his polite alacrity. It seems he made a great display of it. 'Certainly—of course — certainly — command me.' He was not properly awake, and had a notion of being very civil in these extraordinary circumstances, of showing his unquestioning readiness. She left the room, and he followed her; in the passage they disturbed an old hag who did the casual cooking of the household, though she was so decrepit as to be hardly able to understand human speech. She got up and hobbled behind them, mumbling toothlessly. On the verandah a hammock of sailcloth, belonging to Cornelius, swayed lightly to the touch of Jim's elbow. It was empty.

"The Patusan establishment, like all the posts of Stein's Trading Company, had originally consisted of four buildings. Two of them were represented by two heaps of sticks, broken bamboos, rotten thatch, over which the four corner-posts of hardwood leaned sadly at different angles: the principal storeroom, however, stood yet, facing the agent's house. It was an oblong hut, built of mud and clay: it had at one end a wide door of stout planking, which so far had not come off the hinges, and in one of the side walls there was a square aperture, a sort of window, with three wooden bars. Before descending the few steps the girl turned her face over her shoulder and said quickly, 'You

were to be set upon while you slept.' Jim tells me he experienced a sense of deception. It was the old story. He was weary of these attempts upon his life. He had had his fill of these alarms. He was sick of them. He assured me he was angry with the girl for deceiving him. He had followed her under the impression that it was she who wanted his help, and now he had half a mind to turn on his heel and go back in disgust. 'Do you know,' he commented profoundly, 'I rather think I was not quite myself for whole weeks on end about that time?' 'Oh yes. You were though,' I couldn't help contradicting.

"But she moved on swiftly, and he followed her into the courtyard. All its fences had fallen in a long time ago; the neighbours' buffaloes would pace across the open space snorting profoundly, without haste; the very jungle was invading it already. Jim and the girl stopped in the rank grass. The light in which they stood made a dense blackness all round, and only above their heads there was an opulent glitter of stars. He told me it was a beautiful night — quite cool, with a little stir of breeze from the river. It seems he noticed its friendly beauty. Remember this is a love-story I am telling you now. A lovely night that seemed to breathe on them a soft caress. The flame of the torch streamed now and then with a fluttering noise like a flag, and for a time this was the only sound. 'They are in the storeroom waiting,' whispered the girl; 'they are waiting for the signal.' 'Who's to give it?' he asked. She shook the torch, which blazed up after a shower of sparks. 'Only you have been sleeping so restlessly,' she continued in a murmur. 'I watched your sleep, too.' 'You!' he exclaimed, craning his neck to look about him. 'You think I watched on this night only!' she said, with a sort of despairing indignation.

"He says it was as if he had received a blow on the chest. He gasped. He thought he had been an awful brute somehow, and he felt remorseful, touched, happy, elated. This, let me remind you again, is a love-story; you can see it by the imbecility, not a repulsive imbecility, the exalted imbecility of these proceedings, this station in torchlight, as if they had come there on purpose to have it out for the edification of concealed murderers. If Sherif Ali's emissaries had been possessed— as Jim remarked—of a pennyworth of spunk, this was the time to make a rush. His heart was thumping—not with fear — but he seemed to hear the grass rustle, and he stepped smartly out of the light. Something dark, imperfectly seen, flitted rapidly out of sight. He called out in a strong voice, 'Cornelius! O Cornelius!' A profound silence succeeded: his voice did not seem to have carried twenty feet. Again the girl was by his side. 'Fly!' she said. The old woman was coming up; her broken figure hovered in crippled little jumps on the edge of the light; they heard her mumbling, and a light, moaning sigh. 'Fly!' repeated the girl in his ear

excitedly. 'They are frightened now—this light—the voices. They know you are awake now—they know you are big, strong, fearless . . .' 'If I am all that,' he began, but she interrupted him. 'Yes—to-night! But what of to-morrow night? Of the next night? Of the night after—of all the many, many nights? Can I be always watching?' A sobbing catch of her breath affected him beyond the power of words.

"He told me that he had never felt so small, so powerless—and as to courage, what was the good of it, he thought. He was so helpless that even flight seemed of no use; and though she kept on whispering, 'Go to Doramin, go to Doramin,' with feverish insistence, he realised that for him there was no refuge from that loneliness which centupled all his dangers except—in her. 'I thought,' he said to me, 'that if I went away from her it would be the end of everything somehow.' Only as they couldn't stop there for ever in the middle of that courtyard, he made up his mind to go and look into the storehouse. He let her follow him without thinking of any protest, as if they had been indissolubly united. 'I am fearless—am I?' he muttered through his teeth. She restrained his arm. 'Wait till you hear my voice,' she said, and, torch in hand, ran lightly round the corner. He remained alone in the darkness, his face to the door: not a sound, not a breath came from the other side. The old hag let out a dreary groan somewhere behind his back. He heard a high-pitched almost screaming call from the girl. 'Now! Push!' He pushed violently; the door swung with a creak and a clatter, disclosing to his intense astonishment the low dungeon-like interior illuminated by a lurid, wavering glare. A turmoil of smoke eddied down upon an empty wooden crate in the middle of the floor, a litter of rags and straw tried to soar, but only stirred feebly in the draught. She had thrust the light through the bars of the window. He saw her bare round arm extended and rigid, holding up the torch with the steadiness of an iron bracket. A conical ragged heap of old mats cumbered a distant corner almost to the ceiling, and that was all.

"He explained to me that he was bitterly disappointed at this. His fortitude had been tried by so many warnings, he had been for weeks surrounded by so many hints of danger, that he wanted the relief of some reality, of something tangible that he could meet. 'It would have cleared the air for a couple of hours at least, if you know what I mean,' he said to me. 'Jove! I had been living for days with a stone on my chest.' Now at last he had thought he would get hold of something, and—nothing! Not a trace, not a sign of anybody. He had raised his weapon as the door flew open, but now his arm fell. 'Fire! Defend yourself,' the girl outside cried in an agonising voice. She, being in the dark and with her arm thrust in to the shoulder through the small hole, couldn't see what was going on, and she dared not withdraw the torch now to run

round. 'There's nobody here!' yelled Jim contemptuously, but his impulse to burst into a resentful exasperated laugh died without a sound: he had perceived in the very act of turning away that he was exchanging glances with a pair of eyes in the heap of mats. He saw a shifting gleam of whites. 'Come out!' he cried in a fury, a little doubtful, and a dark-faced head, a head without a body, shaped itself in the rubbish, a strangely detached head, that looked at him with a steady scowl. Next moment the whole mound stirred, and with a low grunt a man emerged swiftly, and bounded towards Jim. Behind him the mats as it were jumped and flew, his right arm was raised with a crooked elbow, and the dull blade of a *kriss* protruded from his fist held off, a little above his head. A cloth wound tight round his loins seemed dazzlingly white on his bronze skin; his naked body glistened as if wet.

"Jim noted all this. He told me he was experiencing a feeling of unutterable relief, of vengeful elation. He held his shot, he says, deliberately. He held it for the tenth part of a second, for three strides of the man—an unconscionable time. He held it for the pleasure of saying to himself, That's a dead man! He was absolutely positive and certain. He let him come on because it did not matter. A dead man, anyhow. He noticed the dilated nostrils, the wide eyes, the intent, eager stillness of the face, and then he fired.

"The explosion in that confined space was stunning. He stepped back a pace. He saw the man jerk his head up, fling his arms forward, and drop the *kriss*. He ascertained afterwards that he had shot him through the mouth, a little upwards, the bullet coming out high at the back of the skull. With the impetus of his rush the man drove straight on, his face suddenly gaping disfigured, with his hands open before him gropingly as though blind, and landed with terrific violence on his forehead, just short of Jim's bare toes. Jim says he didn't lose the smallest detail of all this. He found himself calm, appeased, without rancour, without uneasiness, as if the death of that man had atoned for everything. The place was getting very full of smoke from the torch, thickening like a black fog in which the unswaying flame burned blood-red without a flicker. He walked in resolutely, striding over the dead body, and covered with his revolver another naked figure outlined vaguely at the other end. As he was about to pull the trigger, the man threw away with force a short heavy spear, and squatted submissively on his hams, his back to the wall and his clasped hands between his legs. 'You want your life?' Jim said. The other made no sound. 'How many more of you?' asked Jim again. 'Two more, Tuan,' said the man very softly, looking with big fascinated eyes into the muzzle of the revolver. Accordingly two more crawled from under the mats, holding out ostentatiously their empty hands."

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Jim took up an advantageous position and shepherded them out in a bunch through the doorway: all that time the torch had remained vertical in the grip of a little hand, without so much as a tremble. The three men obeyed him, perfectly mute, moving automatically. He ranged them in a row. 'Link arms!' he ordered. They did so. 'The first who withdraws his arm or turns his head is a dead man,' he said. 'March!' They stepped out together, rigidly; he followed, and at the side the girl, in a trailing white gown, her black hair falling as low as her waist, bore the light. Erect and swaying, she seemed to glide without touching the earth; the only sound was the silky swish and rustle of the long grass. 'Stop!' cried Jim.

"The river-bank was steep; a great freshness ascended, the light fell on the edge of smooth dark water frothing without a ripple; right and left the shapes of the houses ran together below the sharp outlines of the roofs. 'Take my greetings to Sherif Ali—till I come myself,' said Jim. Not one head of the three budged. 'Jump!' he thundered. The three splashes made one splash, a shower flew up, black heads bobbed convulsively, and disappeared; but a great blowing and spluttering went on, growing faint, for they were diving industriously, in great fear of a parting shot. Jim turned to the girl, who had been a silent and attentive observer. His heart seemed suddenly to grow too big for his breast and choke him in the hollow of his throat. This probably made him speechless for so long, and after returning his gaze she flung the burning torch with a wide sweep of the arm into the river. The ruddy fiery glare, taking a long flight through the night, sank with a vicious hiss, and the calm soft starlight descended upon them, unchecked.

"He did not tell me what it was he said when at last he recovered his voice. I don't suppose he could be very eloquent. The world was still, the night breathed on them, one of those nights that seem created for the sheltering of tenderness, and there are moments when our souls, as if freed from their dark envelope, glow with an exquisite sensibility that makes certain silences more lucid than speeches. As to the girl, he told me, 'She broke down a bit. Excitement—don't you know. Reaction. Deucedly tired she must have been—and all that kind of thing. And—and—hang it all—she was fond of me, don't you see. . . . I too . . . didn't know, of course . . . never entered my head . . .'

"There he got up and began to walk about in some agitation. 'I—I love her dearly. More than I could tell. Of course one cannot tell. You take a different view of your actions when you come to

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"There he got up and began to walk about in some agitation. 'I—I love her dearly. More than I could tell. Of course one cannot tell. You take a different view of your actions when you come to

understand, when you are *made* to understand every day that your existence is necessary—you see, absolutely necessary—to another person. I am made to feel that. Wonderful. But only try to think what her life had been. It is too extravagantly awful! Isn't it? And me finding her here like this—as you may go out for a stroll and come suddenly upon somebody drowning in a lonely dark place. Jove! No time to lose. Well, it is a trust too . . . I believe I am equal to it . . .'

"I must tell you the girl had left us to ourselves some time before. He slapped his chest. 'Yes! I feel that, but I believe I am equal to all my luck!' He had the gift of finding a special meaning in everything that happened to him. This was the view he took of his love-affair; it was idyllic, a little solemn, and also true, since his belief had all the unshakable seriousness of youth. Some time after, on another occasion, he said to me, 'I've been only two years here, and now, upon my word, I can't conceive being able to live anywhere else. The very thought of the world outside is enough to give me a fright; because, don't you see,' he continued, with downcast eyes watching the action of his boot busied in squashing thoroughly a tiny bit of dried mud (we were strolling on the river-bank)—'Because I have not forgotten why I came here. Not yet!'

"I refrained from looking at him, but I think I heard a short sigh; we took a turn or two in silence. 'Upon my soul and conscience,' he began again, 'if such a thing can be forgotten, then I think I have a right to dismiss it from my mind. Ask any man here' . . . his voice changed. 'Is it not strange,' he went on in a gentle, almost yearning tone, 'that all these people, all these people who would do anything for me, can never be made to understand? Never! If you disbelieved me I could not call them up. It seems hard, somehow. I am stupid, am I not? What more can I want? If you ask them who is brave—who is true—who is just—who is it they would trust with their lives?—they would say, Tuan Jim. And yet they can never know the real, real truth . . .'

"That's what he said to me on my last day with him. I did not let a murmur escape me: I felt he was going to say more, and come no nearer to the root of the matter. The sun, whose concentrated glare dwarfs the earth into a restless mote of dust, had sunk behind the forest, and the diffused light from an opal sky seemed to cast upon a world without shadows and without brilliance the illusion of a calm and pensive greatness. I don't know why, listening to him, I should have noted so distinctly the gradual darkening of the river, of the air; the irresistible slow work of the night settling silently on all the visible forms, effacing the outlines, burying the shapes deeper and deeper, like a steady fall of impalpable black dust.

"'Jove!' he began abruptly, 'there are days when a fellow is too absurd for anything;

only I know I can tell you what I like. I talk about being done with it—with the bally thing at the back of my head . . . Forgetting . . . Hang me if I know! I can think of it quietly. After all, what has it proved? Nothing. I suppose you don't think so . . .'

"I made a protesting murmur.

"'No matter,' he said. 'I am satisfied . . . nearly. I've got to look only at the face of the first man that comes along, to regain my confidence. They can't be made to understand what is going on in me. What of that? Come! I haven't done so badly.'

"'Not so badly,' I said.

"'But all the same, you wouldn't like to have me aboard your own ship—hey?'

"'Confound you!' I cried. 'Stop this.'

"'Aha! You see,' he said, crowing, as it were, over me placidly. 'Only,' he went on, 'you just try to tell this to any of them here. They would think you a fool, a liar, or worse. And so I can stand it. I've done a thing or two for them, but this is what they have done for me.'

"'My dear chap,' I cried, 'you shall always remain for them an insoluble mystery.' Thereupon we were silent.

"'Mystery,' he repeated, before looking up. 'Well, then let me always remain here.'

"After the sun had set, the darkness seemed to drive upon us, borne in every faint puff of the breeze. In the middle of a hedged path I saw the arrested, gaunt, watchful, and apparently one-legged silhouette of Tamb' Itam; and across the dusky space my eye detected something white moving to and fro behind the supports of the roof. As soon as Jim, with Tamb' Itam at his heels, had started upon his evening rounds, I went up to the house alone, and, unexpectedly, found myself waylaid by the girl, who had been clearly waiting for this opportunity.

"It is hard to tell you what it was precisely she wanted to wrest from me. Obviously it would be something very simple—the simplest impossibility in the world; as, for instance, the exact description of the form of a cloud. She wanted an assurance, a statement, a promise, an explanation—I don't know how to call it: the thing has no name. It was dark under the projecting roof, and all I could see were the flowing lines of her gown, the pale small oval of her face, with the white flash of her teeth, and, turned towards me, the big sombre orbits of her eyes, where there seemed to be a faint stir, such as you may fancy you can detect when you plunge your gaze to the bottom of an immensely deep well. What is it that moves there? A blind monster or a lost gleam from the universe. It occurred to me—don't laugh—that all things being dissimilar, she was more inscrutable in her childish ignorance than the sphinx propounding childish riddles to wayfarers. She had been carried off to Patusan before her eyes were open. She had grown up there; she had seen nothing, she had known nothing, she had

no conception of anything. I ask myself whether she were sure that anything else existed. What notions she may have formed of the outside world is to me inconceivable: all that she knew of its inhabitants were a betrayed woman and a sinister pantaloon. Her lover also came to her from there, gifted with irresistible seductions; but what would become of her if he should return to these inconceivable regions that seemed always to claim back their own! Her mother had warned her of this with tears, before she died . . .

"She had caught hold of my arm firmly, and as soon as I had stopped she had withdrawn her hand in haste. She was audacious and shrinking. She feared nothing, but she was checked by the profound incertitude and the extreme strangeness—a brave person groping in the dark. I belonged to this Unknown that might claim Jim for its own at any moment. I was, as it were, in the secret of its nature and of its intentions;—the confidant of a threatening mystery;—armed with its power perhaps! I believe she supposed I could with a word whisk Jim away out of her very arms: it is my sober conviction she went through agonies of apprehension during my long talks with Jim; through a real and intolerable anguish that might have conceivably driven her into plotting my murder, had the fierceness of her soul been equal to the tremendous situation it had created. This is my impression, and it is all I can give you: the whole thing dawned gradually upon me, and as it got clearer and clearer I was overwhelmed by a slow incredulous amazement. She made me believe her, but there is no word that on my lips could render the effect of the headlong and vehement whisper, of the soft, passionate tones, of the sudden breathless pause and the appealing movement of the white arms extended swiftly. They fell; the ghostly figure swayed like a slender tree in the wind, the pale oval of the face drooped; it was impossible to distinguish her features, the darkness of the eyes was unfathomable; two wide sleeves uprose in the dark like unfolding wings, and she stood silent, holding her head in her hands."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"I was immensely touched: her youth, her ignorance, her pretty beauty, which had the simple charm and the delicate vigour of a wild-flower, her pathetic pleading, her helplessness, appealed to me with almost the strength of her own unreasonable and natural fear. She feared the unknown as we all do, and her ignorance made the unknown infinitely vast. I stood for it, for myself, for you fellows, for all the world that neither cared for Jim nor needed him in the least. I would have been ready enough to answer for the indifference of the teem-

ing earth but for the reflection that he too belonged to this mysterious unknown of her fears, and that, however much I stood for, I did not stand for him. This made me hesitate. A murmur of hopeless pain unsealed my lips. I began by protesting that I at least had come with no intention to take Jim away.

"Why did I come, then? After a slight movement she was as still as a marble statue in the night. I tried to explain briefly: friendship, business; if I had any wish in the matter it was rather to see him stay. . . . 'They always go,' she murmured. The breath of sad wisdom from the grave which her piety wreathed with flowers seemed to pass in a faint sigh. . . . Nothing, I said, could separate Jim from her.

"It is my firm conviction now; it was my conviction at the time; it was the only possible conclusion from the facts of the case. It was not made more certain by her whispering in a tone in which one speaks to oneself, 'He swore this to me.' 'Did you ask him?' I said.

"She made a step nearer. 'No. Never!' She had asked him only to go away. It was that night on the river-bank, after he had killed the man—after she had flung the torch in the water because he was looking at her so. There was too much light, and the danger was over then—for a little time—for a little time. He said then he would not abandon her to Cornelius. She had insisted. She wanted him to leave her. He said that he could not—that it was impossible. He trembled while he said this. She had felt him tremble. . . . One does not require much imagination to see the scene, almost to hear their whispers. She was afraid for him too. I believe that then she saw in him only a predestined victim of dangers which she understood better than himself. Though by nothing but his mere presence he had mastered her heart, had filled all her thoughts, and had possessed himself of all her emotions, she underestimated his chances of success. It is obvious that at about this time everybody was inclined to underestimate his chances. Strictly speaking he didn't seem to have any. I know this was Cornelius's view. He confessed that much to me in extenuation of the shady part he had played in Sherif Ali's plot to do away with the infidel. Even Sherif Ali himself, as it seems certain now, had nothing but contempt for the white man. Jim was to be murdered mainly on religious grounds, I believe. A simple act of piety (and so far infinitely meritorious), but otherwise without much importance. In the last part of this opinion Cornelius concurred. 'Honourable sir,' he whimpered abjectly on the only occasion he managed to have me to himself—'Honourable sir, how was I to know? Who was he? What could he do to make people believe him? What did Mr Stein mean sending a boy like that to talk big to an old servant? I meant to save him for eighty dollars. Only eighty dollars. Why didn't the fool go? Was I to get stabbed my-

self for the sake of a stranger?' He grovelled in spirit before me, with his body doubled up insinuatingly and his hands hovering about my knees, as though he were ready to embrace my legs. 'What's eighty dollars? An insignificant sum to give to a defenceless old man ruined for life by a deceased she-devil.' Here he wept. But I anticipate. I didn't that night chance upon Cornelius till I had had it out with the girl.

"She was unselfish when she urged Jim to leave her, and even to leave the country. It was his danger that was foremost in her thoughts—even if she wanted to save herself too—perhaps unconsciously: but then look at the warning she had, look at the lesson that could be drawn from every moment of the recently ended life in which all her memories were centred. She fell at his feet—she told me so—there by the river, in the discreet light of stars which showed nothing except great masses of silent shadows, indefinite open spaces, and trembling faintly upon the broad stream made it appear as wide as the sea. He had lifted her up. He lifted her up, and then she would struggle no more. Of course not. Strong arms, a tender voice, a stalwart shoulder to rest her poor lonely little head upon. The need—the infinite need—of all this for the aching heart, for the bewildered mind;—the promptings of youth—the necessity of the moment. What would you have? One understands—unless one is incapable of understanding anything under the sun. And so she was content to be lifted up—and held. 'You know—Jove! this is serious—no nonsense in it!' as Jim had whispered hurriedly with a troubled concerned face on the threshold of his house. I don't know so much about nonsense, but there was nothing light-hearted in their romance: they came together under the shadow of a life's disaster, like knight and maiden meeting to exchange vows amongst haunted ruins. The starlight was good enough for that story, a light so faint and remote that it cannot resolve shadows into shapes, and show the other shore of a stream. I did look upon the stream that night and from the very place; it rolled silent and as black as Styx: the next day I went away, but I am not likely to forget what it was she wanted to be saved from when she entreated him to leave her while there was time. She told me what it was, calmed—she was now too passionately interested for mere excitement—in a voice as quiet in the obscurity as her white half-lost figure. She told me, 'I didn't want to die weeping.' I thought I had not heard aright.

"'You did not want to die weeping?' I repeated after her. 'Like my mother,' she added readily. The outlines of her white shape did not stir in the least. 'My mother had wept bitterly before she died,' she explained. An inconceivable calmness seemed to have risen from the ground around us, imperceptibly, like the still rise

of a flood in the night, obliterating the familiar landmarks of emotions. There came upon me, as though I had felt myself losing my footing in the midst of waters, a sudden dread, the dread of the unknown depths. She went on explaining that, being alone with her mother, she had to leave the side of the couch to go and set her back against the door, in order to keep Cornelius out. He had kept on drumming with both fists, only desisting now and again to shout huskily, 'Let me in! Let me in! Let me in!' In a far corner upon a few mats the moribund woman, already speechless and unable to lift her arm, rolled her head over, and with a feeble movement of her hand seemed to command—No! No! and the obedient daughter, setting her shoulders with all her strength against the door, was looking on. 'The tears fell from her eyes—and then she died,' concluded the girl in an imperturbable monotone, which more than anything else, more than the white statuesque immobility of her person, more than any words could do, troubled my mind profoundly with the passive, irremediable horror of the scene. It had the power to drive me out of my conception of existence, out of that shelter each of us makes for himself to creep under in moments of danger, as a tortoise withdraws within its shell. For a moment I had a view of a world that seemed to wear a vast and dismal aspect of disorder, while, in truth, thanks to our unwearied efforts, it is as sunny an arrangement of small conveniences as the mind of man can conceive. But no matter. It was only a moment: I went back into my shell directly. One *must*—don't you know?—though I seemed to have lost all my words in the chaos of dark thoughts I had contemplated for a second or two beyond the pale. But these came back too, for words also belong to the sheltering conception of light and order which is our refuge. I had them ready at my disposal before she whispered softly, 'He swore he would never leave me, when we stood there alone! He swore to me!' . . . 'And is it possible that you—you! do not believe him?' I asked, sincerely reproachful, genuinely shocked, as if I had detected her tampering wantonly with the established order of emotions. Why couldn't she believe? Wherefore this craving for incertitude, this clinging to fear, as if incertitude and fear had been the safeguards of her love. It was monstrous. She should have made for herself a shelter of inexpugnable peace out of that honest affection. She had not the knowledge—not the skill perhaps. The night had come on apace; it had grown pitch-dark where we were, so that without stirring she had faded like the intangible form of a wistful and perverse spirit. And suddenly I heard her quiet whisper again, 'Other men had sworn the same thing.' It was like a meditative comment on some thoughts full of sadness, of awe. And she added, still

lower if possible, 'My father did.' She paused the time to draw an inaudible breath. 'Her father too.' . . . These were the things she knew. At once I said, 'Ah! but he is not like that.' This, it seemed, she did not intend to dispute; but after a time the strange still whisper wandering dreamily in the air stole into my ears. 'Why is he different? Is he better? Is he . . .' 'Upon my word of honour,' I broke in, 'I believe he is.' We subdued our tones to a mysterious pitch. Amongst the huts of Jim's workmen (they were mostly liberated slaves from the Sherif's stockade) somebody started a shrill, drawling song. Across the river a big fire (at Doramin's, I think) made a glowing ball, completely isolated in the night. 'Is he more true?' she murmured. 'Yes,' I said.

'More true than any other man,' she repeated in lingering accents. 'Nobody here,' I said, 'would dream of doubting his word — nobody would dare — except you.'

"I think she made a movement at this: the slender white form wavered, as you can see sometimes on a calm day a thread of smoke sway slightly and then stand upright again above the embers. 'More brave,' she went on in a changed tone. 'Fear will never drive him away from you,' I said a little nervously. The song stopped short on a shrill note, and was succeeded by several voices talking in the distance. Jim's voice too. I was struck by her silence. 'What has he been telling you? He has been telling you something?' I asked. There was no answer. 'What is it he told you?' I insisted.

"'Do you think I can know? How am I to know? How am I to understand?' she cried at last. There was a stir. I believe she was wringing her hands. 'There is something he can never forget.'

"'So much the better for you,' I said gloomily.

"'What is it? What is it?' She put an extraordinary force of appeal into her supplicating tone. 'He says he had been afraid. How can I believe this! Am I a mad woman to believe this? You all remember something! You all go back to it. What is it? You tell me! What is this thing? Is it alive?—is it dead? I hate it. It is cruel. Has it got a face and a voice — this calamity? Will he see it—will he hear it? In his sleep perhaps when he cannot see me—and then arise and go. Ah! I will never forgive him. My mother had forgiven—but I, never! Will it be a sign—a call . . .'

"It was a wonderful experience. She mistrusted his very slumbers—and she seemed to think I could tell her why! Thus a poor mortal seduced by the charm of an apparition might have tried to wring from another ghost the tremendous secret of the claim the other world holds over a disembodied soul astray amongst the passions of this earth. The very ground on which I stood seemed to melt under my feet. And it was so simple too; but if the

spirits evoked by our fears and our unrest have ever to vouch for each other's constancy before the forlorn magicians that we are, then I—I alone of us dwellers in the flesh — have shuddered in the hopeless chill of such a task. A sign, a call! How telling in its expression was her ignorance. A few words! How she came to know them, how she came to pronounce them, I can't imagine. Women find their inspiration in the stress of moments that for us are merely awful, absurd, or futile. To discover that she had a voice at all was enough to strike awe into the heart. Had a spurned stone cried out in pain it could not have appeared a greater and more pitiful miracle. These few sounds wandering in the dark had made their two benighted lives tragic to my mind. It was impossible to make her understand. I chafed silently at my impotence. And Jim, too — poor devil! Who would need him? Who would remember him? He had what he wanted. His very existence probably had been forgotten by this time. They had mastered their fates. They were tragic.

"Her immobility before me was clearly expectant, and my part was to speak for my brother from the realm of forgetful shades. I was deeply moved at my responsibility and at her distress. I would have given anything for the power to soothe her frail soul, tormenting itself in its invincible ignorance like a small bird beating about the cruel wires of a cage. Nothing easier than to say, Have no fear! Nothing more difficult. How does one kill fear, I wonder? How do you shoot a spectre through the heart, slash off its spectral head, take it by its spectral throat? It is an enterprise you rush into while you dream, and are glad to make your escape with wet hair and every limb shaking. The bullet is not run, the blade not forged, the man not born; even the winged words of truth drop at your feet like lumps of lead. You require for such a desperate encounter an enchanted and poisoned shaft dipped in a lie too subtle to be found on earth. An enterprise for a dream, my masters!

"I began my exorcism with a heavy heart, with a sort of sullen anger in it too. Jim's voice, suddenly raised with a stern intonation, carried across the courtyard, reproving some dumb sinner by the river-side. Nothing—I said, speaking in a distinct forcible murmur—there could be nothing, in that unknown world she fancied so eager to rob her of her happiness, there was nothing neither living nor dead, there was no face, no voice, no power, that could tear Jim from her side. I drew breath and she whispered softly, 'He told me so.' 'He told you the truth,' I said. 'Nothing,' she sighed out, and abruptly turned upon me with a barely audible intensity of tone. 'Why did you come to us from out there? He speaks of you too often. You make me afraid. Do you—do you want him?' A sort of stealthy

fierceness had crept into our hurried mutters. 'I shall never come again,' I said bitterly. 'And I don't want him. No one wants him.' 'No one,' she repeated in a tone of doubt. 'No one,' I affirmed, feeling myself swayed by some strange excitement. 'You think him strong, wise, courageous, great —why not believe him to be true too? I shall go to-morrow — and that is the end. You shall never be troubled by a voice from there again. This world you don't know is too big to miss him. You understand? Too big. You've got his heart in your hand. You must feel that. You must know that.' 'Yes, I know that,' she breathed out, preserving her statuesque immobility.

"I felt I had done nothing. And what is it that I had wished to do? I am not sure now. At the time I was animated by an inexplicable ardour, as if before some great and necessary task — the influence of the moment upon my mental and emotional state. There are in all our lives such moments, such influences, coming from the outside, as it were, irresistible, incomprehensible—as if brought about by the mysterious conjunctions of the planets. But no matter. She owned, as I had put it to her, his heart. She had that and everything else—if she could only believe it. What I had to tell her was that in the whole world there was no one who ever would need his heart, his mind, his hand. It was a common fate, and yet it seemed an awful thing to say of any man. She listened without a word, and her stillness now was like the protest of an invincible unbelief. What need she care for the world beyond the forests? I asked. From all the multitudes that peopled the vastness of that unknown there would come, I assured her, as long as he lived, neither a call nor a sign for him. Never. I was carried away. Never! Never! I remember with wonder the sort of dogged fierceness I displayed. I had the illusion of having got the spectre by the throat at last. Indeed the whole real thing has left behind the detailed and amazing impression of a dream. Why should she fear? She knew him to be strong, true, wise, brave. He was all that. Certainly. He was more. He was great—invincible—and the world did not want him, it had forgotten him, it would not even know him.

"I stopped; the silence over Patusan was profound, and the feeble dry sound of a paddle striking the side of a canoe somewhere in the middle of the river seemed to make it infinite. 'Is that the truth?' she said slowly. 'It is the truth,' I answered, in the same low tone. 'Why?' she asked. I felt that sort of rage one feels during a hard tussle. The spectre was trying to slip out of my grasp. 'Why?' she repeated; 'tell me!' And as I remained confounded, thinking with despair that nothing had been done, she stamped once with her foot

like a spoilt child. 'Why? Speak.' 'Because he is not good enough,' I said roughly. During the moment's pause I noticed the fire on the other shore blaze up, dilating the circle of its glow like an amazed stare, and contract suddenly to a red pin-point. I only knew how close to me she had been when I felt the clutch of her fingers on my forearm. Without raising her voice, she threw into it an infinity of scathing contempt, bitterness, and despair.

"'This is the very thing he said. . . . You lie!'

"The last two words she cried at me in the native dialect. 'Hear me!' I entreated; she caught her breath tremulously, flung my arm away. 'Nobody, nobody is good enough,' I said with the greatest earnestness. I could hear the sobbing labour of her breath frightfully quickened. I hung my head. What was the use? Footsteps were approaching; I slipped away without another word. . . ."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Marlow swung his legs out, got up quickly, and staggered a little, as though he had been set down after a rush through space. He leaned his back against the balustrade and faced a disordered array of long cane-chairs. The bodies prone in them seemed startled out of their torpor by his movement. One or two sat up as if alarmed; here and there a cigar glowed yet; Marlow looked at them all with the eyes of a man returning from the excessive remoteness of a dream. A throat was cleared; a calm voice encouraged negligently, "Well."

"Nothing," said Marlow with a slight start. "He had told her—that's all. She did not believe him—nothing more. As to myself, I do not know whether it be just, proper, decent for me to rejoice or to be sorry. For my part, I cannot say what I believed—indeed I don't know to this day, and never shall probably. But what did the poor devil believe himself? Truth shall prevail—don't you know. *Magna est veritas et* . . . Yes, when it gets a chance. There is a law, no doubt—and likewise a law regulates your luck in the throwing of dice. It is not Justice the servant of men, but accident, hazard, Fortune—the ally of patient Time—that holds an even and scrupulous balance. Both of us had said the very same thing. Did we both speak the truth—or one of us did—or neither?" . . .

Marlow paused, crossed his arms on his breast, and in a changed tone—

"She said we lied. Poor soul. Well—let's leave it to chance, whose ally is Time, that cannot be hurried, and whose enemy is Death, that will not wait. I had retreated—a little cowed, I must own. I had tried a fall with fear itself and got thrown—of

course. I had only succeeded in adding to her anguish the hint of some mysterious collusion, of an inexplicable and incomprehensible conspiracy to keep her for ever in the dark. And it had come easily, naturally, unavoidably, by his act, by her own act! It was as though I had been shown the working of the implacable destiny of which we are the victims — and the tools. It was appalling to think of the girl whom I had left standing there motionless; Jim's footsteps had a fateful sound as he tramped by, without seeing me, in his laced boots. 'What? No lights!' he said in a loud, surprised voice. 'What are you doing in the dark—you two.' Next moment he caught sight of her, I suppose. 'Hallo, girl!' he cried cheerily. 'Hallo, boy!' she answered at once, with amazing pluck.

"This was their usual greeting to each other, and the bit of swagger she would put into her rather high but sweet voice was very droll, pretty, and childlike. It delighted Jim greatly. This was the last occasion on which I heard them exchange this familiar hail, and it struck a chill into my heart. There was the high sweet voice, the pretty effort, the swagger; but it all seemed to die out prematurely, and the playful call sounded like a moan. It was too confoundedly awful. 'What have you done with Marlow?' Jim was asking; and then, 'Gone down—has he? Funny I didn't meet him. . . . You there, Marlow?'

"I didn't answer. I wasn't going in—not yet at any rate. I really couldn't. While he was calling me I was engaged in making my escape through a little gate leading out upon a stretch of newly cleared ground. No; I couldn't face them yet. I walked hastily with lowered head along a trodden path. The ground rose gently, the few big trees had been felled, the undergrowth had been cut down and the grass fired. He had a mind to try a coffee-plantation there. The big hill, rearing its double summit coal-black in the clear yellow glow of the rising moon, seemed to cast its shadow upon the ground prepared for that experiment. He was going to try ever so many experiments; I had admired his energy, his enterprise, and his shrewdness. Nothing on earth seemed less real now than his plans, his energy, and his enthusiasm; and raising my eyes, I saw part of the moon glittering through the bushes at the bottom of the chasm. For a moment it looked as though the smooth disc, falling from its place in the sky upon the earth, had rolled to the bottom of that precipice: its ascending movement was like a leisurely rebound; it disengaged itself from the tangle of twigs; the bare contorted limb of some tree, growing on the slope, made a black crack right across its face. It threw its level rays afar as if from a cavern, and in this mournful eclipse-like light the stumps of felled trees uprose very dark, the heavy shadows fell at my feet on all sides, my own moving shadow, and across my path the shadow of

the solitary grave perpetually garlanded with flowers. In the darkened moonlight the interlaced blossoms took on shapes foreign to one's memory and colours indefinable to the eye, as though they had been special flowers gathered by no man, grown not in this world, and destined for the use of the dead alone. Their powerful scent hung in the warm air, making it thick and heavy like the fumes of incense. The lumps of white coral shone round the dark mound like a chaplet of bleached skulls, and everything around was so quiet that when I stood still all sound and all movement in the world seemed to come to an end.

"It was a great peace, as if the earth had been one grave, and for a time I stood there thinking mostly of the living who, buried in remote places out of the knowledge of mankind, still are fated to share in its tragic or grotesque miseries. In its noble struggles too—who knows? The human heart is vast enough to contain all the world. It is valiant enough to bear the burden, but where is the courage that would cast it off?

"I suppose I must have fallen into a sentimental mood; I only know that I stood there long enough for the sense of utter solitude to get hold of me so completely that all I had lately seen, all I had heard, and the very human speech itself, seemed to have passed away out of existence, living only for a while longer in my memory, as though I had been the last of mankind. It was a strange and melancholy illusion, evolved half-consciously like all our illusions, which I suspect only to be visions of remote unattainable truth, seen dimly. This was, indeed, one of the lost, forgotten, unknown places of the earth; I had looked under its obscure surface; and I felt that when to-morrow I had left it for ever, it would slip out of existence, to live only in my memory till I myself passed into oblivion. I have that feeling about me now; perhaps it is that feeling which had incited me to tell you the story, to try to hand over to you, as it were, its very existence, its reality—the truth disclosed in a moment of illusion.

"Cornelius broke upon it. Well, he is part of the experience, he too lives in the memory. He bolted out, vermin-like, from the long grass growing in a depression of the ground. I believe his house was rotting somewhere near by, though I've never seen it, not having been far enough in that direction. He ran towards me upon the path; his feet, shod in dirty white shoes, twinkled on the dark earth; he pulled himself up, and began to whine and cringe under a tall stove-pipe hat. His dried-up little carcass was swallowed up, totally lost, in a suit of black broadcloth. That was his costume for holidays and ceremonies, and it reminded me that this was the fourth Sunday I had spent in Patusan. All the time of my stay I had been vaguely aware of his desire to confide in me, if he only could get me all to himself. He

hung about with an eager craving look on his sour yellow little face; but his timidity baulked him as much as my natural reluctance to have anything to do with such an unsavoury creature. He would have succeeded had he not been so ready to slink off as soon as you looked at him. He would slink off before Jim's severe gaze, before my own, which I tried to make indifferent, even before Tamb' Itam's surly, superior glance. He was perpetually slinking away; whenever seen he was seen moving off deviously, his face over his shoulder, with either a mistrustful snarl or a woe-begone, piteous, mute aspect; but no assumed expression could conceal this innate irremediable abjectness of his nature, any more than an arrangement of clothing can conceal some monstrous deformity of the body.

"I don't know whether it was the demoralisation of my utter defeat in my encounter with a spectre of fear less than an hour ago, but I let him capture me without even a show of resistance. I was doomed to be the recipient of confidences, and to be confronted with unanswerable questions. It was trying; but the contempt, the unreasoned contempt, the man's appearance provoked, made it easier to bear. He couldn't possibly matter. Nothing mattered, since I had made up my mind that Jim, for whom alone I cared, had at last mastered his fate. He had told me he was satisfied . . . nearly. This is going further than most of us dare. I—who have the right to think myself good enough—dare not. Neither does any of you here, I suppose? . . ."

Marlow paused, as if expecting an answer. Nobody spoke.

"Quite right," he began again. "Let no soul know, since the truth can be wrung out of us only by some cruel, little, awful catastrophe. But he is one of us, and he could say he was satisfied . . . nearly. Just fancy this! Nearly satisfied. One could almost envy him his catastrophe. Nearly satisfied. After this nothing could matter. It did not matter who suspected him, who trusted him, who loved him, who hated him—especially as it was Cornelius who hated him.

"Yet after all this was a kind of recognition. You shall judge of a man by his foes as well as by his friends, and this enemy of Jim was such as no decent man would be ashamed to own, without, however, making too much of him. This was the view Jim took, and in which I shared; but Jim disregarded him on general grounds. 'My dear Marlow,' he said, 'I feel that if I go straight nothing can touch me. Indeed I do. Now you have been long enough here to have a good look round—and, frankly, don't you think I am pretty safe. It all depends upon me, and, by Jove! I have lots of confidence in myself. The worst thing he could do would be to kill me, I suppose. I don't think for a moment he would. He couldn't, you know—not if I were myself to hand him a loaded rifle for the purpose, and then turn my back

on him. That is the sort of thing he is. And suppose he would — suppose he could? Well—what of that? I didn't come here flying for my life—did I? I came here to set my back against the wall, and I am going to stay here . . .'

"'Till you are *quite* satisfied,' I struck in.

"We were sitting under the roof in the stern of his boat; twenty paddles flashed like one, ten on a side, striking the water with a single splash, while behind our backs Tamb' Itam dipped silently right and left, and stared right down the river, attentive to keep the long canoe in the greatest strength of the current. Jim bowed his head, and our last talk seemed to flicker out for good. He was seeing me off as far as the mouth of the river. The schooner had left the day before, working down and drifting on the ebb, while I had prolonged my stay overnight. And now he was seeing me off.

"Jim had been a little angry with me for mentioning Cornelius at all. I had not, in truth, said much. The man was too insignificant to be dangerous, though he was as full of hate as he could hold. He had called me 'honourable sir' at every second sentence, and had whined at my elbow as he followed me from the grave of his 'late wife' to the gate of Jim's compound. He declared himself the most unhappy of men, a victim, crushed like a worm; he entreated me to look at him. I wouldn't turn my head to do so; but I could see out of the corner of my eye his obsequious shadow gliding after mine, while the moon, suspended on our right hand, seemed to gloat serenely upon the spectacle. He tried to explain—as I've told you—his share in the events of the memorable night. It was a matter of expediency. How could he know who was going to get the upper hand? 'I would have saved him, honourable sir! I would have saved him for eighty dollars,' he whined in dulcet tones, keeping a pace behind me. 'He has saved himself,' I said, 'and he has forgiven you.' I heard a sort of tittering, and turned upon him; at once he appeared ready to take to his heels. 'What are you laughing at?' I asked, standing still. 'Don't be deceived, honourable sir!' he shrieked, seemingly losing all control over his feelings. '*He* save himself! He knows nothing, honourable sir—nothing whatever. Who is he? What does he want here—the big thief? What does he want here? He throws dust into everybody's eyes; he throws dust into your eyes, honourable sir; but he can't throw dust into my eyes. He is a big fool, honourable sir.' I laughed contemptuously, and, turning on my heel, began to walk on again. He ran up to my elbow and whispered forcibly, 'He's no more than a little child here—like a little child—a little child.' Of course I didn't take the slightest notice, and seeing the time pressed, because we were approaching the bamboo fence that glittered over the

blackened ground of the clearing, he came to the point. He commenced by being abjectly lachrymose. His great misfortunes had affected his head. He hoped I would kindly forget what nothing but his troubles made him say. He didn't mean anything by it; only the honourable sir did not know what it was to be ruined, broken down, trampled upon. After this introduction he approached the matter near his heart, but in such a rambling, ejaculatory, craven fashion, that for a long time I couldn't make out what he was driving at. He wanted me to intercede with Jim in his favour. It seemed, too, to be some sort of money affair. I heard time and again the words, 'Moderate provision—suitable present.' He seemed to be claiming value for something, and he even went the length of saying with some warmth that life was not worth having if a man were to be robbed of everything. I did not breathe a word, of course, but neither did I stop my ears. The gist of the affair, which became clear to me gradually, was in this, that he regarded himself as entitled to some money in exchange for the girl. He had brought her up. Somebody else's child. Great trouble and pains — old man now—suitable present. If the honourable sir would say a word. . . . I stood still to look at him with curiosity, and fearful lest I should think him extortionate, I suppose, he hastily brought himself to make a concession. In consideration of a 'suitable present' given at once, he would, he declared, be willing to undertake the charge of the girl, 'without any other provision—when the time came for the gentleman to go home.' His little yellow face, all crumpled as though it had been squeezed together, expressed the most anxious, eager avarice. His voice whined coaxingly, 'No more trouble—natural guardian — a sum of money . . .'

"I stood there and marvelled. That kind of thing, with him, was evidently a vocation. I discovered suddenly in his cringing attitude a sort of assurance, as though he had been all his life dealing in certitudes. He must have thought I was dispassionately considering his proposal, because he became as sweet as honey. 'Every gentleman made a provision when the time came to go home,' he began insinuatingly. I slammed the little gate. 'In this case, Mr Cornelius,' I said, 'the time shall never come.' He took a few seconds to gather this in. 'What!' he fairly squealed. 'Why,' I continued from my side of the gate, 'haven't you heard him say so himself? He will never go home.' 'Oh! this is too much,' he cried, within two feet of me. He did not address me as 'honoured sir' any more. He was very still. His voice, without a trace of humility in it, was very low at first. 'Never go—ah! He —he—he comes here devil knows from where—comes here—devil knows why—to trample on me till I die—ah—trample' (he stamped softly with both feet),

'trample like this — nobody knows why — till I die. . . .' His voice became quite extinct; he was bothered by a little cough; he came up close to the fence and told me in a confidential and piteous whine that he would *not* be trampled upon. 'Patience — patience,' he muttered, striking his breast. I had done laughing at him, but unexpectedly he treated me to a wild cracked burst of it. 'Ha! ha! ha! We shall see! We shall see! What? Steal from me? Steal from me everything. Everything! Everything!' His head drooped on one shoulder, his hands were hanging before him lightly clasped. One would have thought he had cherished the girl with surpassing love, that his spirit had been crushed and his heart broken by the most cruel of spoliations. Suddenly he lifted his head and shot out an infamous word. 'Like her mother — she is like her deceitful mother. Exactly. In her face too. In her face. The devil!' He leaned his forehead against the fence, and in that position uttered threats and horrible blasphemies in Portuguese in a very weak voice, interrupted by miserable plaints and groans, coming out with a heave of the shoulders as though he had been overtaken by a deadly fit of sickness. It was inexpressibly dismal and vile, and I left him. He tried to shout something after me. Some disparagement of Jim, I believe —not too loud though, we were too near the house. All I heard distinctly was, 'No more than a little child—a little child.'"

CHAPTER XXXV.

"But next morning, at the first bend of the river shutting off the houses of Patusan, all this dropped out of my sight bodily, with its colour, its design, and its meaning, like a picture created by fancy on a canvas, upon which, after long contemplation, you turn your back for the last time. It remains in the memory motionless, unfaded, with its life arrested, in an unchanging light. There are the ambitions, the fears, the hate, the hopes, and they remain in my mind just as I had seen them—intense and as if for ever suspended in their expression. I had turned away from the picture and was going back to the world where events move, men change, light flickers, life flows in a clear stream, no matter whether over mud or over stones. I wasn't going to dive into it; I would have enough to do to keep my head above the surface. But as to what I was leaving behind, I cannot imagine any alteration. The immense and magnanimous Doramin and his little motherly witch of a wife, gazing together upon the land and nursing secretly their dreams of parental ambition; Tunku Allang, wizened and greatly perplexed; Dain Waris, intelligent and brave, with his firm glance and ironic friendliness; the girl, absorbed in her frightened adoration; Tamb' Itam, surly and

faithful; Cornelius, leaning his forehead against the fence under the moonlight—I am certain of them. They exist as if under an enchanter's wand. But the figure round which all these are grouped—that one lives, and I am not certain of him. No magician's wand can immobilise him under my eyes. He is one of us.

"We did not part till late. He accompanied me on the first stage of my journey back to the world he had renounced, and the way at times seemed to lead through the heart of a primeval wilderness. The empty reaches sparkled under the high sun; between the high walls of vegetation the heat drowsed upon the water, and the boat, impelled vigorously, cut her way through the air that seemed to have settled dense and warm under the shelter of lofty trees.

"We conversed little. The shadow of the impending separation had already put an immense space between us, and when we spoke it was with an effort, as if to force our low voices across a vast and increasing distance. The boat fairly flew; we sweltered side by side in the stagnant superheated air; the smell of mud, of marsh, the primeval smell of fecund earth, seemed to sting our faces; then suddenly at a bend it was as if a great hand far away had lifted a heavy curtain, had flung open an immense portal. The light itself seemed to stir, the sky above our heads widened, a faint murmur reached our ears, a freshness enveloped us, filled our lungs, quickened our thoughts, our blood, our regrets—and, straight ahead, the forests sank down against the dark-blue ridge of the sea.

"I breathed deeply, I revelled in the vastness of the opened horizon, in the different atmosphere that seemed to vibrate with the toil of life, with the energy of an impeccable world. This sky and this sea were open to me. The girl was right—there was a sign, a call in them—something to which I responded with every fibre of my being. I let my eyes roam through space, like a man released from bonds who stretches his cramped limbs, runs, leaps, responds to the inspiring elation of freedom. 'This is glorious!' I cried, and then I looked at the sinner by my side. He sat with his head sunk on his breast and said, 'Yes' without raising his eyes, as if afraid to see writ large on the clear sky that rested upon the offing the reproach of his romantic conscience.

"I remember the smallest details of that afternoon. We landed on a bit of white beach. It was backed by a low cliff wooded on the brow, draped in creepers to the very foot. Below us the plain of the sea, of a serene and intense blue, stretched with a slight upward tilt to the thread-like horizon drawn at the height of our eyes. Great waves of glitter blew lightly along the pitted dark surface, as swift as feathers chased by the breeze. A chain of islands sat broken and massive facing the wide estuary, which spread itself in a sheet

of pale glassy water reflecting faithfully the contour of the shore. High in the colourless sunshine a solitary bird, all black, hovered, dropping and soaring above the same spot with a slight rocking motion of the wings. A ragged, sooty bunch of mat hovels was perched above its own inverted image upon a multitude of high piles the colour of ebony. A tiny black canoe put off from amongst them with two tiny men, all black, who toiled exceedingly, striking down at the pale water: it seemed to slide painfully on a mirror. The bunch of miserable hovels was the fishing village that boasted of the white lord's especial protection, and the two men were the old headman and his son-in-law. They landed and walked up to us on the white sand, lean, dark-brown as if dried in smoke, with ashy patches on the skin of their naked shoulders and breasts. Their hair was bound in dirty but carefully folded headkerchiefs, and the old man began at once to state a complaint, stretching a lank arm, screwing up at Jim his old bleared eyes confidently. The Rajah's people would not leave them alone; there was some trouble about a lot of turtles' eggs they had been collecting on the islets there — and leaning at arm's-length upon his paddle, he pointed with a brown skinny hand at the sea. Jim listened for a time without looking up, and at last told him gently to wait. He would hear him by-and-by. They withdrew to some little distance, and sat on their heels, with their paddles lying before them on the sand; there were silvery gleams in their eyes as they followed our movements patiently: and the immensity of the outspread sea, the stillness of the coast, passing north and south beyond the limits of my vision, made up one colossal Presence watching us four dwarfs isolated on a strip of glistening sand.

"'The trouble is,' remarked Jim moodily, 'that for generations these beggars of fishermen in that village there had been considered as the Rajah's personal slaves — and the old rip can't get it into his head that . . .'

"He paused. 'That you have changed all that,' I said.

"'Yes. I've changed all that,' he muttered in a gloomy voice.

"'You have had your opportunity,' I pursued.

"'Had I?' he said. 'Well, yes. I suppose so. Yes. I have got back my confidence in myself — a good name — yet sometimes . . . I shall hold what I've got. Can't expect anything more.' He flung his arm out towards the sea. 'Not out there anyhow.' He stamped his foot upon the sand. 'This is my limit, because nothing less will do.'

"We continued pacing the beach. 'Yes, I've changed all that,' he went on, with a sidelong glance at the two patient squatting fishermen; 'but only try to think what it would be if I went away. Jove! can't you see it? Hell loose. No! To-morrow I shall go and take my chance of drinking that silly old Tunku Allang's coffee, and

make no end of fuss over these rotten turtles' eggs. No. I can't say—enough. Never. I must go on, go on for ever holding up my end, to feel sure that nothing can touch me. I must stick to their belief in me to feel safe and to—to' . . . He cast about for a word, seemed to look for it on the sea . . . 'to keep in touch with' . . . His voice sank suddenly to a murmur . . . 'with those whom I shall never see any more. With—with—you, for instance.'

"I was profoundly humbled by his words. 'For God's sake,' I said, 'don't set me up, my dear fellow; just look to yourself.' I felt a gratitude, an affection, for that straggler whose eyes had singled me out, keeping my place in the ranks of an insignificant multitude. How little that was to boast of, after all! I turned my burning face away; under the low sun, glowing, darkened and crimson, like an ember snatched from the fire, the sea lay outspread, offering all its immense stillness to the approach of the fiery orb. Twice he was going to speak, but checked himself: at last, as if he had found a formula—

"'I shall be faithful,' he said quietly. 'I shall be faithful,' he repeated, without looking at me, but for the first time letting his eyes wander upon the waters, whose blueness had changed to a gloomy purple under the fires of sunset. Ah! he was romantic, romantic. I recalled some words of Stein's. . . . 'In the destructive element immerse! . . . To follow the dream, and again to follow the dream—and so—always—*usque ad finem* . . .' He was romantic, but none the less true. Who could tell what forms, what visions, what faces, what forgiveness he could see in the glow of the west! . . . A small boat, leaving the schooner, moved slowly, with a regular beat of two oars, towards the sandbank to take me off. 'And then there's Jewel,' he said, out of the great silence of earth, sky, and sea, which had mastered my very thoughts so that his voice made me start. 'There's Jewel,' 'Yes,' I murmured. 'I need not tell you what she is to me,' he pursued. 'You've seen. In time she will come to understand . . .' 'I hope so,' I interrupted. 'She trusts me, too,' he mused, and then changed his tone. 'When shall we meet next, I wonder?' he said.

"'Never—unless you come out,' I answered, avoiding his glance. He didn't seem to be surprised; he kept very quiet for a while.

"'Good-bye, then,' he said, after a pause. 'Perhaps it's just as well.'

"We shook hands, and I walked to the boat, which waited with her nose on the beach. He followed me. The schooner, her mainsail set and jib-sheet to windward, curveted on the purple sea; there was a rosy tinge on her sails. 'Will you be going home again soon?' asked Jim, just as I swung my leg over the gunwale. 'In a year or so if I live,' I said. The forefoot grated on the sand, the boat

floated, the oars rose and fell once, twice. Jim, at the water's edge, raised his voice, 'Tell them . . .' he began. I signed to the men to cease rowing, and waited in wonder. Tell who? The half-submerged sun faced him; I could see its red gleam in his eyes that looked dumbly at me. . . . 'No—nothing,' he said, and with a slight sign of his hand motioned the boat away. I did not look again at the shore till I had clambered on board the schooner.

"By that time the sun had set. The twilight lay over the east, and the coast, turned black, extended infinitely from north and south: its sombre wall seemed the very stronghold of the night; only the western horizon was a great blaze of gold and crimson in which a big detached cloud floated sleepily, casting a slaty shadow on the water beneath, and I saw Jim on the beach watching the schooner fall off and gather headway.

"The two half-naked fishermen had arisen as soon as I had left; they were no doubt pouring the plaint of their trifling, miserable, oppressed lives into the ears of the white lord, and no doubt he was listening to it, making it his own, for was it not a part of his luck—the luck 'from the word Go'—the luck to which he had assured me he was so completely equal. They too, I should think, were in luck, and I was sure their pertinacity would be equal to it. Their dark-skinned bodies vanished on the dark background long before I had lost sight of their protector. He was white from head to foot, persistently visible with the stronghold of the night at his back, the sea at his feet, the opportunity by his side—still veiled. What do you say? Was it still veiled? I don't know. For me that white figure in the stillness of coast and sea seemed to stand at the heart of a vast enigma. The twilight was ebbing from the sky above his head, the strip of sand had sunk under his feet, he himself appeared no bigger than a child — then only a speck, a tiny speck, that seemed to catch all the light left in a darkened world. . . . And, suddenly, I lost him. . . ."

(To be continued.)

RODDY MOR THE ROVER.

OF all the roamin' jacks that yet to Farranfore kem over,
As paramount I'd surely count ould Roddy Mor the Rover,
Wid steeple hat and stiff cravat and nate nankeen knee-breeches,
And on his back a pedlar's pack just rowlin' o'er wid riches.

For so it was, when o'er the hill his coat-tails they'd come flyin',
The sharpest tongue of all was still, the crossest child quit cryin';
Ould women even left their tay, ould men their glass of toddy,
An', spoon in hand, a welcome grand would wave and wave to Roddy.

An' when his treasures he'd unlade in view of all the village,
In from her milkin' ran the maid, the boy from out the tillage;
The while the rogue in each new vogue the lasses he'd go drapin',
Until their lads his ribbons, plaids, and rings had no escapin'.

"Now whisht your prate, and take your toys," cried he, "my darlin' childer,
Or my new ballads wid your noise complately you'll bewilder."
Then his Come-All-Ye he'd advance wid such a quare comether
That you might say he tuk away our sinse and pince together.

But there! of all the roamin' jacks that trass the counthry over,
For paramount I'd ever count ould Roddy Mor the Rover;
For 'deed an' I believe that when his sperrit parts his body,
If he's allowed, he'll draw a crowd in Heaven itself will Roddy!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FATHER O'FLYNN."

THE OLD GOLF AND THE NEW.

THE new and revised Rules of Golf drawn up by the Special Committee of the Royal and Ancient Club have now been in force for about a year. They marked an epoch in the history of the game. With their incoming, and all they signify in their changed phraseology and new definitions, went finally and for ever the old, leisurely, and courteous pastime by the side of the sea; and in its place entered in official state one more "sport" of the silver-pot and monthly-medal variety, to be played wherever there is space enough, and sufficient players to form a club.

There is no blinking, nor any need to blink, the fact that in order to meet the demands of the modern development of golf, the rules of the game were sadly in need of fuller and more accurate expression. Also, it is clear their interpretation in the ante-pot days was somewhat loose and easy-going. But behind this admission there lies a world of significance. To put the matter shortly: we have lost a pastime and gained a "sport." The olden golfer's sole fame lay in the club-record and the memories of his fellows. The present-day player aims at seeing his name in the daily newspaper and weekly organs out of count. Silver vessels of greater or less magnificence, won with a handicap of twenty-four strokes, adorn the sideboards of many a home. They witness no excellence at the game, but only a "win." Colney Hatch and Hanwell have their "champions"; no hydropathic establishment is complete without a "links" and a record-holder. If it must be so, so let it be. This state of affairs will probably endure for many days yet, and Sheffield be kept busy making golf-pots and medals. It is highly probable, however, that the absurdity of much of it will force itself on the more important clubs. As they grow in age and dignity they will become more chary of their medals. They will grapple with the handicap farce, and realise that the receiver of eighteen strokes has no business with any trophy of theirs dangling at his watch-chain. In the course of experience they will be forced back naturally on the old form of golf as a pastime of quite private strife, and reserve their decorations for players whose skill makes them worthy to wear them. Before that time is reached, however, there are indications that golf as a "sport" may have to pass through the gate-money stage. Considering the development that cricket and football have attained as public "sports" based on gate-money, it will be surprising if the possibilities of professional golf escape the cupidity of club-managers.

Without wishing to contend that the game of golf is not the better for having a code of clearly expressed rules, we think

it may not be uninteresting to consider the conditions under which the old game (as we must call it) was conducted. The newest of new rules embodies no fresh principle. The game played to-day under the new code is in all essentials intended to be the same game as was played in days long dead. How, then, did our forefathers manage to get on with those old rules, now deemed so imperfect and insufficient? In examining old club-codes one is struck by the surprisingly small number of their rules. Yet, notwithstanding their paucity and looseness of expression, they served for the guidance and control of many generations of golfers. Now, the Scots have never been accused of playing their games, or carrying on any contest whatever, with less keenness than other peoples. As they are commonly, and perhaps correctly, thought to be as disputatious as most, we are presented with a fine field of inquiry as to how they survived their disputes. A Scot in a bunker we take to be the least amiable person the world and its chances can produce, yet the justiciary records of Scotland are singularly free from cases of killing or maiming on the links. If any people could frame metaphysically perfect rules, one would think it would be the Scots. Yet ever since the game spread over the South the Englishman has found occasion in the Rules of Golf for some of his choicest humour—mostly, it must be confessed, of the kind the Scot never laughs at. When he found his ball in a pigsty on some course carved out of agricultural land with the fixtures left standing, he was quite naturally led to reflect on the rule concerning hazards. He thereupon clamoured for more light. He pictured himself standing in a pigsty, a mashie in one hand and the Rules of Golf in the other, his finger on P in the index, and no indication whatever forthcoming as to whether he might sole his club. Was a pigsty a hazard? Rest would he never until the Royal and Ancient Club had decided the point. What did the old-time golfer do in a pigsty? He had even fewer rules to guide him than the lately superseded code contained, and if he had fewer pigsties on his links, no doubt every now and again he found a badly played shot in some analogous place. Needless to say, he could argue a point of procedure with any Southron that ever threw jibes at the rules: Scottish ecclesiastical history forbids any doubt on that matter. How, then, did those old, hard-headed, metaphysical-minded, quick-tempered generations solve their golf difficulties?

In order to answer this interesting question, we are forced back to deductions from such records as have come down to the present day, helped out by the memories of old players, not necessarily of note or renown, who followed the game, say, forty or fifty years ago. The records of golf are scanty indeed, but they combine with tradition and living memory to show that it was for the most part the pastime of gentlemen,

largely country gentlemen, or gentlemen with country houses. It was by their patronage that the game flourished, greens were kept up, and the club- and ball-makers supported. It was they who formed the clubs, maintained or made the rules and practices, and handed on the traditions.

The matches these men played were unquestionably of the very keenest; the stakes were commonly some contribution to the supper—the claret it might be, or the Malaga. Also, they only played the match-game by holes. What their score for the round might be they neither knew nor cared. Shrewd wit, caustic humour, and keen banter were part of the play. Even to-day, the talk of a foursome of middle-aged Scotsmen has an acid flavour about it that you find in no other nationality. The nature of the game seems peculiarly favourable to the display of Scots wit. Which produced the other—the game the wit, or the wit the game—is a difficult question. Some say the game came from Holland: if that be true, we incline to think it left that land in disgust, and came to a country where a congenial humour awaited it. That this special humour had full play among these olden golfers is beyond doubt. Indeed it was so much part of the game that the caddies had full licence to indulge in it. "Man, major," said an old caddie to the gentleman who had been using strong language rather freely, "if you wad keep your tongue aff the ba' an' your een on't, you wad play better." And what a fine revenge was that of the wastrel-caddie who had been sent for the first time to the "lock-up" for drunkenness by a gentleman only recently promoted to the local magistracy. When he came out the bailie engaged him to carry his clubs. At a critical point of the match the bailie had a putt of a foot to save the hole. He missed it; and when all had expressed their feelings in the customary way, the caddie said in a loud voice, "Ay, there's mony a man been sent to jail for far less than that!" Was it not another of these porters of the links who, after his employer had played nine holes of missed shots and putts, surrendered the clubs to another caddie with the remark, "Ye'll no mind, laird. I made but a puir breakfast this mornin', an' I'm no in a condeetion to stand ony mair o't."

We do not mean to assert that badinage took the place of rules in those days: the olden golfer had something far more potent than written rule to guide him. He was the inheritor of a great mass of golf-tradition, considered himself the guardian of it, and was careful not to infringe it, nor to permit its infringement by others. He was imbued with the spirit of the game; the letter of it came from the lips of the elders, who on occasion laid down the law with citation of old precedent and authority. In fact, golf-law was very much like the British Constitution. And this consideration increases our respect for those bygone golfers who succeeded in carrying on in a courteous manner an exasperating game with a bare mini-

mum of written rules. Yet after all the world has progressed by traditions and inherited precept for a very much longer time than it has done by written codes or books. And this consideration leads us to the New Golf.

The influence of tradition in the game played to-day over the whole world is very small. No tradition could keep pace with the headlong rush which in a few years converted the pastime of a few parishes into a sport for the universe. A book of rules, a piece of land, and some clubs, sufficed for a beginning anywhere. If in the neighbourhood there lived a man who had played golf before, he became the local Solomon. This extension of the game took place in a day of competitions in all sports, for stake-money, gate-money, silver-pots, or medals. Every game had its champion, its county champion, its club champion, its local champion. The old hole-game of golf did not lend itself to this form of "sport." But a means of bringing golf into line with other "sports" was found in the stroke-game, — but rarely used in Scotland, and in many places there not used at all. The monthly competition by stroke came thus to the front, and the book-and-pencil stage was firmly established. On every course the aspiring golfer could be seen carefully recording 9's and 10's in a little book, silver-bound, with a gold pencil. Handicaps by strokes followed, and as every stroke saved carried with it a possible "pot," the rules were minutely and metaphysically scrutinised for the advantage of the player. Poor rules! they had never been used to such treatment in their old home, where ancient tradition and authority eked out their undoubted shortcomings. Add to this, that the game had come to be played over courses of a nature never contemplated as possible when the rules were framed, and it can be readily comprehended what a bad time the old code had. It becomes clear also how the New Golfer was formed. At his best he was a man cut off from salutary influences, struggling with a book of rules and an impossible golf-course. At his worst he was a person who, if he could defy the spirit and practice of the game and yet conform to the printed letter of the rule, thought himself a mighty clever fellow, and not seldom proceeded to air his contention in the public prints with as great satisfaction as if he had won the championship.

We proceed now to state what may seem a paradox; nevertheless a fairly varied experience of golf in England and Scotland emboldens us to assert that, in the matter of rules and definitions, the Englishman is more given to hair-splitting than the Scot. Whether he is better at it when both have started we decline to decide, but he is more ready to begin. To put the thing in another way, the Englishman is more of a formalist than the Scot. He is a greater stickler for technicalities, and although eager to excel in the play of the game, is always keenly alive to the

possibilities of a victory by interpretation of rules. For some few years past the golf periodicals have teemed with subtle points submitted by Southern players, and the Committee of the Royal and Ancient Club have been kept busy settling (in a golf sense) more metaphysical difficulties than occurred to the Scots in all the previous centuries of the game's history. An almost invariable feature of these discussions has been, that the objectors would not be satisfied with any liberal reference to the spirit of the game. They did not want any sentimental trash about sportsmanship. They called for a strictly scientific definition. For example, at what particular moment of time, or by virtue of what special action or posture, does a player "address the ball"? Much depends upon the answer, because if the ball move after that special act or posture is effected, then the player loses a stroke. Now, we do not believe it lies within the wit of man to define "addressing the ball." The only person who can decide the question is the man addressing it, if even he. And unfortunately, to judge by the Englishman's golf dialectics, he considers his opponent is entitled to profit by anything that cannot be proved against him (like an accused criminal), and he desires to be in a position to prove all contentions. Was it not a Southron who, after his ball had been knocked away by his opponent's on the putting-green and that opponent had played again, replaced it in its original position as a stymie. A most ingenious man, surely, to hit upon a technicality in his favour which had never occurred to the whole nation of Scots.

But the chief glory of the New Golf is "Bogey": an abstraction who always holes out in a fixed number of strokes, never less, never more. He is a shadow, yet a powerful reality; his name is a jest, yet he is an object of respect. There have been discussions as to who invented him. We decline to believe he was invented. He simply came when wanted,—showed himself, and, so far, was discovered. At the psychological moment he burst on England in all his obviousness. His vogue became universal, his victory complete. But in Scotland—no, they will not have Bogey in Scotland. As a matter of fact, the great increase of players and clubs in Scotland, which represents the reaction from English enthusiasm, is mostly composed of Bogey worshippers. They are pining to have him for a playfellow, dying for his monthly pots. They look with longing eyes on the Bogey sweepstakes and the holiday Bogey competition; but it is their misfortune to live in a land where he is a very false god indeed. Their first fealty, as ever, is to their nationality, and they solemnly declare, when put to it, "We do not recognise the Golf Bogey. He is a bastard English invention. We really have the same idea ourselves, and call it Par Score, but we never play with it. Why should we play against abstractions, when there are so many fellow-mortals for whom defeat is a most salutary experience?" So

declares your Scot in his club-house, wishing all the while that somebody would have the moral courage to bid national pride and Par Score be hanged, and boldly set out henceforth to play Bogey. Well, the time is coming; it will come with a rush. Bogey is a fixed institution of the new and largely English golf: with the Tweed behind him the Scot plays Bogey with enthusiasm. Fifty Royal and Ancient Clubs could not abolish him now, nor much longer retard his adoption in the North. Bogey is unquestionably on his way to Scotland. He is not travelling express, it is true; but he is getting there all the same, and Par Score is warming a throne for him. The Bogey-medals are all ready in Sheffield; the Scottish golfer sits in his club-house longing for one; the modern Scottish sideboard calls aloud for the silver cup,—whether won from scratch or with eighteen strokes of handicap is all the same to the sideboard.

There is something to be said for Bogey, although he is modern and English, and neither he nor his putative ghostly parent, Par Score, was ever dreamed of on the links of the past. He provides the solitary player with an ever-ready opponent. Many a Southern golfer manifests more delight in beating Bogey than in defeating a real live antagonist, and a man may often be seen to start out alone with enthusiasm to play Bogey, and in the effort work himself and his caddie into a state of genuine excitement. Without a Bogey opponent the man would simply be playing objectless, irresponsible shots. You may often have remarked him stand—him and his caddie—on the putting-green, with the true furor of the putt on both, and heard his "Hush, I've got this to beat Bogey!" There is something strange about the phenomenon, something even uncanny. Bogey is nobody. In literal fact, he is a concoction of the Green Committee; but of what use would it be to urge that consideration on the man who comes in hot and elated from a victory over him—over Bogey, Bogey whom everybody knows and believes in, and struggles against, curses, gloats over, cherishes? Walking unscathed over hot stones is nothing compared to the miracle of an elderly gentleman, who would die at the command to dig ten minutes in his garden, going forth voluntarily for a two hours' exhausting struggle against the golf Bogey. It is impossible to excite any such sentiment about Par Score. "I ended one up on Par Score," is an inconceivable form of expression: it is naught; it cannot exist. But now say, "I beat Bogey by a putt," and the universal sentiment of Golfdom responds—even if it disbelieves you. Par Score is nothing; nobody knows him or heeds him; but Bogey is a very potent god indeed. "What's Bogey's score for this hole?" the Englishman asked of his caddie, after a depressing experience of the long fifth at St Andrews. "Bogey doesna play gowff here," was the answer. "But what would he take?"

persisted the Englishman, whose natural way of sizing up a hole was by the Bogey standard. "Weel, sir, it would greatly depend upon wha he was playin'. If he was playin' against anither bogle, it would be a d—d fine match to see!" But, all the same, Bogey is coming north. He is part of the New Golf, and there is a new-golf Scotland waiting for him. Some fine day soon you will see him step out of the train at the Waverley Station with an armful of monthly pots and medals, and he will be warmly welcomed.

Is the level of play higher now than of old? This is a fascinating question impossible of settlement. But the imagination declines to be baulked by impossibility. How, for instance, would Alan Robertson and young Tommy Morris fare against Vardon and Taylor? Well, we are of opinion that they would fare excellently well whether in singles or foursomes, and we will proceed to give our reasons for that faith. Suppose St Andrews to be the chosen course, and old Alan and young Tommy brought from the land of shades for a season to uphold their fame. Can you not see Alan's astonished gaze, and hear his honest voice: "Losh, mercy! whaur's the whuns? An' see thae puttin'-greens, they're just lawns." And do you not remark the glitter of joy in young Tommy's eye as he handles the modern deep-faced driver and finds that between it and the hard-moulded modern gutta ball he can put 15 to 20 yards on to his long shots? Because, of course, before the match could be fair you would have to allow these returned golfers a time to accustom themselves to changed conditions. That these conditions are all favourable to lower scoring there can be no doubt. The "fair green" at St Andrews, instead of being, as it once was, a comparatively narrow course bordered by whins and long grass, is now a wide cleared space practically devoid of hazard save the sand-bunkers. Moreover, the green is now trodden hard as asphalt, and the "run" of a low raking drive is increased considerably. Some old players still alive, who can accurately recall the former state of the course, will tell you that to-day it is from four to six strokes easier. Perhaps four more nearly represents the difference than six to players of the class of our imaginary foursome. To the player who practically never misses a ball, driving, whether from the tee or through the green, resolves itself into a question of keeping the line. In this particular, we are convinced, lies the secret of Vardon's astonishing success during the past three years. To men of his class a border of whins is no great matter if the playing-course is fairly wide; but it makes all the difference to a player less certain of length and line combined. On the other hand, the prospect of a wide open course, without long grass or thickets of whin, would certainly prove an exhilarative to old Alan and young Tommy, and they would "let out" at the ball in a way they rarely did before. It is told how Alan Robertson, who was by trade a

maker of "featheries," used to burn the "gutties" that fell in his way, hoping thus to banish them from the links. Old Tom Morris has described Alan as the "cunningest bit body that ever handled a gowff-club"; and it is strange such a pawky man did not see that in burning the early gutta balls he was only increasing the demand. But you may be sure that if he had to stand up against Taylor and Vardon to-day, he would not require more than a short trial of present-day balls to persuade him of their superiority over the old skin-covered feather-stuffed things he was so proud to manufacture. The first gutta balls were not so greatly superior. They were made from sheet gutta-percha, kneaded, and doubled over in a very primitive way, so that they always showed where the end had been tucked in. No, no; in a golf-match to-day old Alan would unhesitatingly select the best ball he could find, a well-seasoned gutta. Just think how he would putt with it on these "lawns," and how he would exult to see it run true off his wooden putter. For Alan would stick to his wooden putter, and so would young Tommy. And it would not take but a day or two for both of them to become convinced of the advantages of the deep, half-round face of the modern driver. Some persons are fond of saying that the essential difference between old and present-day driving is that while the ancients picked it up with the swing, the moderns *hit* the ball; but it is quite clear, from the recollection of many who were close observers of his play, that young Tommy was a *hitter*. He not only followed *through* from the tee, but often followed *after* his ball, his Scotch bonnet preceding him. When he and Davie Strath took to swiping against each other, there was no question but that all their muscle was put into the stroke. And we do not believe that the long drivers of to-day and recent years, of whom Douglas Rolland, James Braid, and Harry Vardon are the most prominent —we speak of straight length, not irresponsible swiping into space—we do not believe that, given the same clubs and balls and close-cropped courses, they could outdrive old Alan or young Tommy by a yard. In the matter of putting, it seems probable that Tommy and Alan were the superiors of most professionals now alive. Neither Vardon nor Taylor shines particularly at that part of the game. Vardon's genius for all other departments fails him on the putting-green. That Vardon has a genius for golf we think there can be no doubt. It is genius of the same class and quality as made the play of old Alan and young Tommy so remarkable. Taylor we hold to be a clever, level-headed, calculating golfer, with enormous power of self-command. He is talent personified; but he wants the dash and brilliance, and the imagination, looking like mere luck, which is Vardon's chief characteristic. And so, coming back to our supposition of old Alan Robertson and young Tommy Morris returning from the shades for a summer's golfing with their powers at the

prime, we think with equal conditions they would just beat Vardon and Taylor—beat them by just as much as Alan's genius and inspiration were better than Taylor's talent. As for the singles, we consider Alan would probably beat Taylor, and Tommy and Vardon would halve. Tommy was beaten occasionally, and Vardon has been beaten; but of both it may be said that their best game never has been beaten. We are of those who regret that Vardon did not win his third successive championship at St Andrews last June. The eight strokes that separated him from Taylor represented the turn of the luck, and defective putting, where, as we have already remarked, Vardon's genius deserts him, and he becomes an ordinary golfer. We have no desire to detract from Taylor's many merits as a player. He deserves his championship, even if the luck served him; and four rounds of St Andrews all in the 70's form an unparalleled achievement. All we say is, that his game is slightly dull. It lacks passion and imagination. It wants the happy confidence of Vardon's; it wants the fearless dash of Braid's; it is mathematical, cold, precise. It is no better than Jack White's, if Jack had the match stamina or the score-talent. In a word, it is the New Golf in perfection. In Vardon and Braid you see golf —the gowff—*in excelsis*. Reverse our assumed foursome; set Vardon and Braid back into the 'Sixties or 'Seventies; give them the balls and clubs then in vogue,—and they would both run young Tommy close, probably hold him, perhaps beat him at times, by virtue of the genius for the game that shows in every shot they play.

A subtle thing is the spirit of golf; perhaps not altogether at its best under the refined modern conditions of perfect balls, perfect clubs, perfect greens, and — perfect sobriety. Lord, how the world changes! Where is the wastrel of the links who for half-a-crown would give you some hints, a third, and a beating? Where are the clothes bleaching on the links for which a rule was provided? Where are the days when bones were coupled with stones as break-clubs? Why bones? It is a pleasing mystery we do not wish explained. These times and conditions are gone, and we need not envy them, but rather strive to keep what was admirable in them. Pleasant it is to play golf over the lord of the manor's home park, to hole out on trim greens of velvet, to drive through close-cropped loamy turf; to carry the pigsty from the tee, and loft the watercress-bed to the green; to struggle for Bogey's sweepstake, and win the monthly medal—two monthly medals—a necklet of monthly medals, all with a handicap of ten strokes, and the New and Revised Code of Rules. But oh, for the wish-wash of the sea, and the laird and the doctor and the major, and the old caddy—the humorous, keen, wicked wastrel —and the clubmaker's shop with its smell of pitch and shavings, and the old play-club with its third shaft and sixth new head, and—the Old Golf!

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

FIGUREHEADS OF EMOTION — HOMAGE TO LAFAYETTE — THE CHARACTER OF THE POLITICAL PEDANT — CROMWELL-GRANDISON — FRANCE AND AMERICA — *LES NATIONS ALLIÉES* — THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN AMERICA — THE POLITICS OF FEELING — THE INVENTION OF PRINTING — GUTENBERG AND THE YELLOW PRESS — THE LEVITY OF BELGIUM AND ITS RESULT — WHAT IS POLITICAL CRIME? — THE EXTRADITION OF ANARCHISTS.

THERE is nothing more foolish in the records of human folly than the figureheads of emotion. A man or a name may be chosen to represent an aspiration or a policy without thought of the name or interest in the man. The label, moreover, once affixed, cannot be dislodged. All the whitewashing in the world, for instance, will never clear Faustina from the unmerited stigma which disgraces her; and Richard III., despite the historian, still goes limping down the slope of fame as the crook-backed murderer. Daniel Defoe, again, will represent unto the end of time a smug emancipation which would sorely puzzle that swashbuckler of the pen; and Fitzgerald, already the booty of a club, will presently be adapted to the comprehension of the nursery. The tendency, irrational though it be, is picturesque enough. It is always more amusing to contemplate men than qualities, and truth cannot rob the fool of his symbol. Besides, though chance counts for much in our ultimate reputations, many a man has forced posterity to accept him at the value which he puts upon himself, and none ever succeeded better than Marie-Jean-Paul-Roch-Yves-Gilbert de Motier, Marquis de Lafayette.

It is not for nothing, indeed, that this gentleman has been known as "the hero of two worlds." For more than a century he has been adored in America, as he has been discreetly admired in France. He has stood to both nations as the symbol of justice and freedom. The echo of his name still binds the two republics in the chains of amity,—chains which have been enthusiastically strengthened by the statue recently set up in Paris by the women or the children of America. The practice of conferring statues upon foreign countries is inconvenient, and is not likely to be imitated by Great Britain; but for the moment, at any rate, France and America seem united in a common worship, and it is only when we inquire what Lafayette means to either country that the cloven hoof of hypocrisy shows itself.

That America should pay honour to the soldier who aided her in the struggle of emancipation is just and proper. "It is through him," said an Ameri-

can a century ago, "that France made us free," and only after Lafayette's first return to France did Rochambeau sail for the West with his army. Wherefore we may contemplate without rancour and without regret the particular homage thus paid by an interested people. France, on the other hand, doubtless bows the knee to Lafayette *pour embêter les Anglais*, and of course she fails. England is not annoyed at an honour rendered to those who fought valiantly against her; only if France desires to exalt our enemies, why does she choose Lafayette instead of Montcalm or Dupleix? But a national hero should be something more than serviceable: he should be exalted or romantic; he should be gifted with political courage or with moral splendour. And though at the age of twenty Lafayette devoted his sword to America, he lived out some sixty inglorious years of pedantry and tergiversation in his own country.

The hero of two worlds, then, had not the smallest element of heroism in his character. He might have served admirably as the symbol of constitutional pedantry or of popular philosophy. He might have been studied as an awful warning to French and Americans alike. America is the home of bustle and action; yet we find it doing reverence to a man who never was able to fit practice with theory, and who after years of political intrigue became the tool of a blackguard like Fouché. France, on the other hand, is firmly convinced that freemasonry is a devilish contrivance, and here she is honouring a soldier who not only was a freemason, but who regarded the sacred Revolution with suspicion, and eyed Napoleon with a timid hate. However, in spite of America and of France, there, in the garden of the Louvre, stands a statue of the narrowest, vainest egoist who ever fought for a copy-book heading, or believed that the passions of man might be controlled by a moral maxim.

Moral maxims, in fact, were Lafayette's stock-in-trade. He was peculiarly devoted to these easy abstractions which sound well, and mean all or nothing. The rights of man, whatever they may be, were his constant admiration, and he laid it down for an axiom that if a nation were oppressed, its first and holiest duty was insurrection. A man might go far with such an axiom as that in the eighteenth century, and for a while Lafayette, rich, young, and self-sacrificing, seemed a kind of ancient Roman prodigy. His vast wealth did not impair his austerity, and the court of Louis XVI. had no charm for this lofty citizen, who despised his noble birth, and whose sole ambition was to help the people, in whose inherent sense and virtue he implicitly believed. It is not strange, therefore, that, returned from America, he threw himself energetically into the Revolution. The year 1789 gave him a splendid opportunity for the exercise of his moral eloquence, and no doubt he babbled of the fraternity which made the

gutters of Paris run with blood. The foolish crime of July 14, which remains France's national *fête*, and which was the excuse for a lying, hypocritical legend, was hailed by him with a tepid enthusiasm, and he thought it not inappropriate to send the key of the Bastille across the ocean to Washington! But the storm, which his half-understood formulæ had helped to raise, could not be lulled by mere words, and words were all that Lafayette had to give. He mistrusted all men, and feared all measures. The one thing that seems to have stirred his blood was a constitution, and in 1789 constitutions were more easily torn than fashioned. It is a pitiable spectacle this of Lafayette attempting to calm a mob of butchers with the suggestion of a limited monarchy! And of course the mob wreaked its fury upon him, although he had advocated the abolition of titles, and was proud to be called M. Motier. So he was burned in effigy, and greeted with dishonour as a Cæsar or a Cromwell. But he was no Cæsar: had he had a drop of Cæsar's blood in his veins he might have saved France from the consequences of her madness. Yet never once did he dominate events: on the miserable October day when he rode to Versailles with the roughs, he did not lead them—it was they who pushed him to the adventure in spite of himself; and in spite of himself he climbed to momentary power and influence.

As he never long persisted in a course of action, so he was never constant to his alliances. Mirabeau, for instance, tried to make him his friend; but what union could exist between a man and a parchment? Lafayette pretended that he was shocked by Mirabeau's lack of principle; Mirabeau, of course, was outraged at Lafayette's unfailing vacillation. The truth is, that Lafayette, like all men of slender talent, hated an impulsive and commanding genius, which would have relegated him for always to a second place. Accordingly, after much chatter of mutual confidence and close friendship, Lafayette deserted the man before whose grandeur he trembled, and added one more to the list of his innocent betrayals. Mirabeau called him Cromwell-Grandison in derision; and though there is no point of resemblance between him and Cromwell, a priggish Grandison on a white horse is precisely what he was. So he continued his timid little career — now in prison, now in flight, now ruling his country, as he thought. When Napoleon appeared to gather up the broken pieces of France, Lafayette distrusted him as he had distrusted Mirabeau. Napoleon did not chatter of theories and constitutional safeguards; he made himself perpetual consul and then emperor, and at every move our Grandison shuddered. Where were the Rights of Man? he asked in trepidation. Was it for this that the governor of the Bastille was foully murdered? However, Napoleon justly estimated the "thin con-

stitutional pedant," as Carlyle calls him, and Lafayette retired to his farm. Of course 1814 brought him from his retirement, and after Waterloo he helped Fouché to secure the abdication and ruin of Napoleon. In the moment of defeat, his country needed a strong soldier to avenge her. But patriotism was nothing compared to the constitution, and once again the constitution triumphed.

"Clear, thin, inflexible as water turned to thin ice"—such, in Carlyle's immortal phrase, was "the hero of two worlds." Yet the "water turned to thin ice" was not wholly ineffectual. The single ambition which engrossed the vanity of Lafayette's soul was to be a popular hero; and in his lifetime he was never a hero, and he was popular only in America. But after death he achieved what he failed to achieve in life. The *cabotin* that was in him has survived. The white horse and the cocked hat are still remembered. Lafayette's statue is set up in Paris, and his tomb—improperly placed in the graveyard of the Rue Picpus, where there should be no room for rebels—is visited by pious worshippers. And, for the sake of France and America alike, we cannot but regret the worship. There is little glory and no wit in choosing a pedant to represent the aspirations of a people.

But there is another point of interest in the ceremony performed a few weeks since to Paris: it marked conspicuously the link which binds France in America. Washington, also, has his statue, and Washington had nothing to do with France, except that the great Houdon modelled his bust. But is there anything behind these interchanges of brass or marble better than a vapid sentiment? Do the ceremonies represent a solid alliance or a fantastic sympathy? A fantastic sympathy is all that we can ascribe to them. "Les nations alliées," once said Bismarck, "ne font pas une alliance," and France and America are nothing else than allied nations. Yet ever since America declared her independence she has professed a friendship for France, which has been generously returned. Nor did the services of Lafayette and Rochambeau go unrewarded. If they gave independence to America, America repaid the service by an astounding adulation of the Terror. Such men as Jefferson were well fitted to sympathise with Lafayette and his band. For Jefferson, too, started from the dogma that the bloodiest republic was better than the most benign monarchy. He appears to have cherished a positive admiration for Louis XVI., of whom he once wrote, "He is the honestest man in the kingdom, and the most regular and economical. He has no foible which will enlist him against the good of his people; and whatever constitution will promote this he will befriend, but he will not befriend it obstinately: he has given repeated proof of a readiness to sacrifice his opinion to the wish of the nation." That is higher praise than has often

been meted out to Louis XVI. Yet the same Jefferson did not express a syllable of regret at the good king's death; he merely declared approvingly that the murder would render kings "amenable to death like other criminals," though, if his former estimate were true, it is difficult to define the crime of the French king. While Jefferson, who should have known the truth, received the news with so pedantic a composure, it is not remarkable that his countrymen exulted in the blood that had been shed. History cannot match the ribald levity and callous brutality exhibited by the Americans in the months that followed the death of the king. America, at any rate, was determined to see nothing but courage and magnanimity in the Terror. The mob was frenzied with joy at hearing the death of a king, who had wished it well. The Philadelphia militia assembled at Weed's Ferry, and gave such toasts as: "May the sister republics of France and America be incorporate as light and heat!" "May the succeeding generation wonder that such beings as kings were ever permitted to exist!" But words were insufficient for these brave militiamen, and so they invented a noble ceremony: "The head of a pig was severed from its body, and being recognised as an emblem of the murdered King of France, was carried round to the guests. Each one placing the cap of liberty upon his head, pronounced the word 'tyrant,' and proceeded to mangle with his knife the head of the luckless creature doomed to be served for so unworthy a company."

Thus the tragedy was played out. "Never was the memory of any man so cruelly insulted," said William Cobbett, "as that of this mild and humane monarch. He was guillotined in effigy, in the capital of the Union, twenty or thirty times a-day, during one whole winter and part of the summer. Men, women, and children flocked to the tragical exhibition, and not a single paragraph appeared in the papers to shame them for it." In fact, only one protest was raised against the enormities of the people: the keeper of an inn between Chester and Wilmington, where the stage stopped, had a sign painted of "The Guillotined Queen of France," but his amiable thought was unappreciated, and he was compelled to change it. For the rest, the poets of America celebrated the Guillotine as the Tenth Muse, and one Joel Barlow showed, in a poem entitled "The Conspiracy of Kings," how far on the road of brutality a few maxims will carry a foolish man. Here is a specimen:—

"Think not I came to croak with omen'd yell
The dire damnations of your future hell.
I know your crusted souls!
Oh, Burke, degenerate slave, with grief and shame
The Muse indignant must repeat thy name."

It is difficult to perceive the necessity, and that particular Muse has long ago passed into obscurity. But Joel Barlow

was regarded seriously and gravely applauded when he penned his rubbish. He was encouraged to denounce "those prolific monsters Courts and Kings" with all the violence at his command; yet Burke, degenerate slave, has outlived him and all his cant of reason and liberty.[1]

Thus it was that America paid the debt she owed to France and Lafayette; and ever since a tempered sympathy has united the two republics. But the sympathy was not, and is not, practical; it is merely the politics of feeling, which will never result in action. For however strong be the sentiment (or hysteria) which unites two peoples, they will only take arms together if the advantage of both be assured. At the same time, a sentimental policy has long had a charm for France, who loves Russia, "her great friend," with a constant heart and with a very shadowy dream of profit. So, too, French and American citizens stand on the same platform and exchange platitudes concerning Lafayette. And though the politics of feeling have an appearance of generosity, they attain only one result—a mass of meaningless words and the gentle ridicule of other nations.

But it is the journals of the world which encourage the sentiment we have attempted to describe, and which make possible these politics of feeling. Wherefore the indirect responsibility for much false emotion may be laid at the door of Johann Gutenberg, who when he gave the printing-press to Europe could not realise the fatal importance of his design. For him printing was the art of duplicating beautiful books; for too many of our contemporaries it is an instrument which disseminates false news and which keeps alive ancient hypocrisies. Even in Shakespeare's time the printing-press was an exclusive, aristocratic contrivance, and it is significant that Shakespeare condemns it by the mouth of Jack Cade. "Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of this realm," says Cade to the buckram lord, "in erecting a grammar-school: and whereas, before, our forefathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou hast caused printing to be used, and, contrary to the king, his crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill." It is curious to note how completely the point of view has changed in our own time. The Jack Cades of to-day clamour for schools, and regard the printing-press as a "palladium." But while Gutenberg and the Editor of the 'Yellow Journal' are as the poles asunder, both have employed the same means to a different end, and we can imagine nothing more grotesque in the benign fields of Hades than an encounter between the printer, whose jubilee has lately been celebrated in

[1] See C. D. Hazen's 'Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution,' a collection of the most astounding documents.

Germany, and an American editor. Might it not be conceived something after this fashion?—

Scene.—A meadow in Hades. Grey shadows flit in and out the distant trees. Apart from the rest sits Johann Gutenberg, bearded and austere, meditating perchance on his famous Bible of the thirty-seven lines, or upon the infamous extortion of the cunning Fust. To him there slides up a Yellow Editor, who, leaping from his silent, intangible automobile, flourishes a phantom cigar, and thus addresses the sage:—

Well, Mr Gutenberg, I'm glad to know you! You and I ought to be acquainted. Where should I have been without your movable little types? Why, nowhere at all. And though it's a sorry business to meet you here, where they print no special editions, and have no limelight displays, we must do the best we can, and——

Gutenberg (*breaking in upon him*). But I know not whom I have the honour to hear.

Yellow Editor. What, don't you know me—the best-advertised man in two continents? I am—or rather I was when I walked the Upper Air—the Boy Editor of New York. Does that say nothing to you?

Gut. No; I am still in the dark.

Y. E. Well, well, I guess you've no telephone hitched on to Hades, or you'd know me fast enough. I must see to that, now I've come among you. Why, I'm the first man who ever saw the real possibilities of your tip. If it hadn't been for me the printing-press would have slumbered on another five hundred years without shaking the world. You never realised what could be done with the biggest circulation.

Gut. Circulation? What is it? I don't understand the word.

Y. E. (*with an outburst of laughter*). You don't begin to know your own trade! Circulation is the soul of the printing-press. We editors don't print "copy" to keep it in the cellar. We cover the earth with our newspapers. Why, when I was in the business I printed more stuff in one night than you and Fust did in both your lives. Three millions of readers a-day, my boy, ready to believe any lie you print—that makes a man feel big.

Gut. But when I was making my Bible, whose memory is an eternal consolation, I was proud if I printed a dozen sheets a-week.

Y. E. A dozen sheets a-week of a Bible! No wonder you came near starvation. The truth is, you missed your chance. How you might have made Maintz hum if you had started a paper, and kept the secret! No competition, for you alone had the press! And if you wanted money, you should have got a syndicate to run you, and then you might have done as much as I did. Where's the use of a noble patron, I should

like to know? The people's the only true patron, and——

Gut. You say you have accomplished much. Have you, too, left works of art behind you which rival in nobility of design and splendour of type the masterpieces which have made me glorious?

Y. E. Splendour of type! What are you talking about? I only want a press that'll rattle me out half-a-million copies in a couple of hours. That's good enough for me. And the ink may be as pallid as these shades and the paper may crinkle up like wood-chips. I guess it will last a day, and to-morrow it will be forgotten in new scandals and fresh headlines.

Gut. But surely we have not pursued the same craft. I was only interested in the perfection of my work. When the beautiful page was finished, my task was done. Who purchased my Bibles I recked not, nor did I ever dream of this base artifice which you call circulation. But at least, when I died at Eltville, I had the satisfaction of an assured immortality. And you? Are you still known among your fellows of the upper earth?

Y. E. Not I! One nail drives out another. But which is the better, fame while you live or fame after death? Give it me piping hot when I can enjoy it. The people on Broadway used to point the finger at me, and I might have governed my country if I liked. And look at the power I had! I ran the whole show as I would; and with no other aid than the types of your invention I made war, or insisted on peace. Not only could I force men to do what I chose, I could force 'em to believe what I chose. Any fool can make the truth credible; it takes a man of genius and a big circulation to thrust falsehood down the public throat. Then, again, there was no great man I didn't call by his Christian name, and I was on easy terms with all the crowned heads. Whom did you know but a common baron? And I was ready to take on anybody's job for a sensation. The criminals feared my reporters far more than they feared the ministers of justice. But then, you see, I was a practical man, and you—you were a dreamer. Yet how much better is the basest practice than the noblest dream!

Gut. Indeed, if my invention be thus perverted, it were better it had never been made. The printing-press in my hands was an instrument of luxury, not a means of irresponsible power. Yet even my contemporaries called it a black art. What would they say of it now, if they heard your boastful rhetoric? No: it is not for you to claim a kinship with Gutenberg. Truth and lies, beauty and squalor, do not acquire the same value because they are both printed.

Y. E. Well, well, don't get huffy about it. I don't wonder you are a bit jealous, but I'll come and tell you more about it another day. You'd like to hear how I interviewed the prize-fighters, I'm sure, and

perhaps I'll find you in a better temper. So long! (And the Yellow Editor is whisked out of sight by his automobile.)

Other times, other morals. Yet there are still some who would rather have printed a single sheet of Gutenberg's masterpiece than have covered the biggest continent of the world with the vulgar falsehoods of the Yellow Press.

The criminal levity of Belgium in liberating Sipido has promptly and abundantly justified itself. We do not mean that one monstrous miscarriage of justice is enough to encourage an anarchist plot; but it is certain that the honour paid to the unsuccessful assassin quickened the hand that was already armed to strike. There are certain drugs which enable a doctor to discover a latent disease, and the enlargement of Sipido, whose hand was shaken (so to say) by the court which tried him, acted upon the political body of the world as Dr Koch's serum acts upon a consumptive frame. Instantly the disease of anarchy showed itself, unhappily, with fatal results. The murder of the Italian king adds one more to the list of useless crimes, and the vain attempt upon the life of the Shah proves, what indeed required no proof, that the anarchist is never inspired to his dastard's work by a just or sufficient cause. The half-imbecile Salsou can have had no grievance against the Emperor of the East: he merely obeyed the voice of his own half-witted vanity, and had he been arrested six years ago, when he was known for a dangerous imbecile, France would have been saved a scandal, and the crazy comrades of the anarchist would have been deprived of a flagrant example.

Indeed it is clearer after each outrage that anarchy is no matter of cause and effect. As we pointed out some months since, the political criminal is only impelled by vanity, hope, and cowardice. Yet the radical journalist persists in discovering a genuine attempt to redress a grievance whenever a half-witted Italian goes forth to kill. "Are there any circumstances," he asks, "in the nature or history of the country which account for it?" And he timidly answers that high taxation and dire poverty are rife in Italy. That may be so, but the dire poverty and high taxation of Italy offered no sound reason why one Italian should have murdered a President of France, or why another should have driven his dagger into the blameless heart of an Austrian Empress. The truth is that we shall never understand the causes of anarchy so long as we seek an obvious explanation. Taxation and poverty do not affect the argument. The Anarchist is born to murder, he is not trained to vengeance; and so dangerous is his inherited complaint that governments would be wisely counselled if they shut him up as soon as they find him, lest an isolated disease should become epidemic.

The Italians have made the record, to use M. Rochefort's elegant phrase, in cutting off the heads of State. But it is not

the hard circumstances of their life which encourage them. They are assassins for the same reason that Irishmen are assassins, because secret societies have always flourished in their midst. How should a country, where the *camorra* has long been a force, feel surprise at a stealthy murder? Anarchy grows faster by association than other crimes. The feeble hand is armed at a word, and where a dozen vain and ignorant agitators are met together there is a constant danger of assassination. Again, secret societies can impose their decisions upon the idlers who join them. Their orders have a definite sanction; the disobedient are easily removed, and the most abject cowardice may be driven to "action" by the fear of domestic punishment. Wherefore the Radical journalist is speaking at random when he declares that a modest taxation will abolish anarchy. "We may be usefully reminded," says he, "that the way to prevent an effect is to remove the cause." That is true enough, and the only way to prevent anarchy is to keep all the known anarchists of the world either in a prison or in a lunatic asylum. The Italians of Patterson, N.J., would be anarchists if they paid no taxes whatever, and all spent their lives, as some of them do, in the grand tour.

Now, it is this fallacy of "cause and effect" which has persuaded men to speak of "political crime," than which a wickeder expression was never devised. There is, and can be, no such thing as political crime, and if there were, it should be doubly punished as a crime without a palliating motive. But a crime is a crime, whatever train of thought suggests it. No political conviction can put a better face upon the murder of a lawful king. Bresci, chosen and armed by his compatriots, was not inspired by heroism. He was merely driven forth by a miserable vanity, a nameless love of publicity, which is no better (nay, far worse) than the greed which leads to burglary. The housebreaker who wants to fill his own pocket, the lover mad with jealousy, receive no mercy at the hands of righteous judges. The anarchist, whose pocket is generally filled by his friends, and who is often accompanied by a faithful mistress, has no better cause of action that the desire to see his name in the papers. Therefore the anarchist, whose motive is baser, should be more severely handled than the highway robber. Yet no sooner is the head of a State sacrificed than we hear the foolish catch-word —"political crime."

But there is another reason why the so-called political murderer should receive the heaviest punishment. By temperament and habit he is more likely to escape notice than the ruffian moved by hunger or jealousy. At school he is commonly the good boy of the class; as he grows up he would rather read Herbert Spencer than loaf in a public-house; and when he joins a secret society he is probably unknown to the police. Accordingly he is free to plot

and suborn as he will. If half a dozen men meet together to rob a hen-roost, they are disturbed at the slightest breath of suspicion; but if they openly conspire to murder a king, they are politicians whose liberty is sacred. And though the police know both their habit and intent, the police is prevented by a rule of the game from arresting their bodies. When the harm is done, then punishment may follow, but until the blow be struck, the officers of the law seem powerless. Freedom of opinion is admirable enough, but freedom of opinion does not need the dagger and the bomb for its adequate expression, and it is far better to prevent anarchy than to secure its punishment.

An opportunity is now given to arrest the ringleaders of an infamous conspiracy. Yet when extradition is demanded, America is content to murmur the words "political crime." We, too, have committed a similar indiscretion in the past, and though we properly punished the ineffable Most, Soho has been and still is a too amiable sanctuary of crime. At the present moment the celebrated Malatesta himself is free of our capital; yet it is commonly rumoured that his brain directs the murderer's hand, and though (maybe) he is paralysed by the strict surveillance of Inspector Melville, Europe would sleep more calmly were this dangerous madman under lock and key. But of America we have little hope. The Anarchists of Patterson, N.J., will still plot in security, and as the telegraph unites Patterson to Rome and Berlin, orders can be transmitted in a moment and with a small risk of detection. Nor is Italy the first to suffer from transatlantic notions of crime. The Fenians plotted in New York without interruption, and carried out their plots with Irish-American gold. More than that, the zeal of Pat Egan was rewarded by an embassy to Chili; and where we failed it is not likely that Italy will succeed. But unless all the nations unite to refuse the Anarchists asylum, "political crime" will flourish for ever, and the criminal will ask to be photographed, and to wonder what the papers say about him, until the end of time. For at present the game of governor and governed is unfairly played, and it is not the kings who load the dice.

CHINA.

AN Under-Secretary of State once declared that no Government in England would of its own accord give five minutes' consideration to the affairs of China, or move a step in promotion of the country's interests there, except under the compulsion of public opinion acting on the House of Commons; and that nothing short of a great war or a great massacre would ever arouse the British people to the importance of their interests in the Far East. He added that the feeling so aroused would be transient, and that unless decided action were taken during effervescence, Parliament, public, and Ministry alike would relapse into their normal apathy.

Many things have happened since the demise of that statesman, but his views have not been discredited. The conditions which he postulated are now present with us, though in an unforeseen combination, and the attention of the people is in its effervescent stage. But as one too suddenly awakened sees the familiar objects round his bed assume grotesque forms, the public is bewildered by the phantasmagoria of atrocities which has been thrust daily under its eyes during the past three months. What a harvest-time that has been for the *chiffoniers* of the daily press, who have cried aloud and spared not one jot or tittle of fact or fiction that could inspire the country with horror. The editing of some of their news would not have overtaxed the genius of the professional telegram-expander, or common fortune-teller. A 5s. medium could rap out as much sense as is contained in such messages as, "We are obliged to be very careful, for food has been short, though not terribly so." Yet we are asked to believe that while the cordon was drawn tight around them the *morituri* in Peking were expending their resources in telegraphing to London such inane twaddle! During the weary time that the turbid torrent was being daily poured out over the civilised world, how often have we not sighed for a gleam of daylight from the imprisoned correspondent of the 'Times,' and how welcome was that one limpid message when at last it came on August 2, clearing up a situation till then obscured beyond hope.

Still the mystery of iniquity is far from being solved, and much sediment will have to settle before the relations of things can be truly discerned. In the meantime it seems a vain exercise of mind to revise each day the hasty conclusions of the preceding. The distribution of praise and blame, the attempted appreciation of the policy and character of individuals or of parties, and clever guesses at the dynastic enigma, seem only to make confusion worse confounded. The operations of the Powers will lead to still more

tragic confusion unless they are guided by some steadier light than the fitful flashes from the actual turmoil.

The present crisis in its details and outward manifestation has admittedly taken the world by surprise. And yet the storm is not a bolt from the blue, not a self-generated phenomenon, but the effect of deep chronic causes. Some of these are obvious enough to the most cursory observer. Some are beyond the scrutiny, though within the knowledge, of foreigners; while some are among the arcana of the Chinese mind. The explosion seems to be the immediate result of an unexpected fusion of three potent social forces in the Chinese State:—

1. General hatred of foreigners, and of Christianity as the emblem and precursor of their aggressions.

2. The element of organised lawlessness which infects Chinese society.

3. A deep-rooted dynastic feud of twenty-five years' duration.

Though these have long been familiar topics with those who give attention to Chinese affairs, yet such an outbreak as has actually occurred has never been predicted from the union of the three forces.

Something, indeed, has been long expected to happen in the palace at Peking, for the Imperial clan was outraged by the *coup d'état* in 1875, which enthroned the reigning Emperor to the exclusion of more legitimate heirs. His patron, the Empress-Dowager, well aware that she was sitting on a volcano during the whole reign, was far more preoccupied with the affairs of the family than with those of the empire. The danger to herself and her *protégé* became further intensified when the truth had to be accepted that the Emperor would never have a natural heir, for then the prospect of yet another *coup d'état* on his demise kept alive the claims of the pretenders. The danger from that source, we may be sure, was in no wise lessened when the Emperor on his unstable throne, becoming filled with foreign doctrines, began to issue programmes of reform, radical and revolutionary. And a climax of exasperation was reached when, in the name of these thrice-odious reforms, foreigners clamoured for a controlling voice in the settlement of the family differences. Their chivalry in the cause of progress involving, as a preliminary step, the expulsion of the Dowager herself from power, was not calculated to conciliate the goodwill of that imperious lady, nor yet of her rivals, nor of the ruling majority, whose motto was to stand on the ancient ways.

Such suggestions as these, of course, leave very much to be explained of what has lately transpired in Peking and throughout the length and breadth of China. Other factors besides those above enumerated have been at work, and for the full exposition of the fierce drama that is being enacted we may even have to wait for the slow verdict of

history. The inexorable condition of the international problem, however, is that events will not pause till we understand them, but demand instant action—right or wrong, so that it be prompt. And what an ordeal for any responsible statesman!

It does not seem that we shall have to lament a paucity of instructors on this great China question. The subject, which has for so many years been overlain by a cloud of indifference, now finds eager inquirers among our general readers, so that those who have anything to say about China, and some perhaps who have not, will at last obtain a hearing. There is room for all: the matter is varied enough to be treated from many sides, and with differing degrees of penetration.

Among recent books on the subject, Mr Joseph Walton's[1] contribution holds an honourable place. "Pagett, M.P.," has been the target for many shafts. Contemptuous colonists, Anglo-Indians, Anglo-Chinese, and other dwellers in distant countries, impatient of his fatuous orations, have said, "Why does he not come and see for himself?" Pagett accepted the challenge. But the much-enduring exiles soon discovered that the unconditioned visit of an M.P. was not all that their fancy painted it. Perhaps it was that the most eager explorers of the outposts of civilisation were not those who sought pure knowledge, but who set out to forage for their private fads. The remedy in such cases aggravated the disease, adding to honest ignorance that worst species of falsehood, truth as a manufactured article. This type of tourist was once depicted in the 'Times': "By the time he has got as far as Delhi he knows the people are miserably poor; at Allahabad the conviction that they are over-taxed is as clear as the day; and before he has eaten two Government House dinners at Calcutta, he discovers that they are groaning under a State Church."

Another rock on which the intelligent traveller is apt to split is that on which sits and sings the siren Hospitality. The expatriated are much given to that primitive virtue, and it would be churlish, even were it possible, to decline their kindly invitations. But being beholden to his host for much of his information, as well as for the facilities for acquiring it, the guest, hampered by the obligations of hospitality, observes, with regard to his hosts and what concerns them, the golden rule, *nil nisi bonum*. Did not the Australians fall foul of Mr Froude for alleged breach of this etiquette?

Excessive hospitality may have the further effect of blocking the acquisition of information, as for instance in the Russian dominions. When carried shoulder-high from post to post the honoured guest sees what he is expected to see, and through the medium

[1] China and the Present Crisis. By J. Walton, M.P. Sampson, Low, & Co.

provided for him, learning no more of the country or the people he is visiting than a Viceroy on tour.

These snares, which commonly beset the path of the political excursionist, are not adduced by way of prejudicing Mr Walton's book, but rather to compliment the writer on his successful evasion of them. Though we cannot say that his information is always free from bias, yet, as he generally gives his authority for the statements he makes, the reader is furnished with the means of correcting the deviations of the writer's compass. The narrative is in the form of letters to the address of Mr Walton's parliamentary constituents: it is a plain tale, free from literary affectations, light, racy, and though superficial in form, a serious purpose underlies the whole. It is a rapid survey of the countries of the Far East with the keen eye of a man of business. Eight months was a short enough time in which to have encompassed an extensive scheme of travel through India, China, Japan, and Korea; but to a man of alert mind there are advantages even in the speed, for it enables him to constantly apply the comparative method in generalising his daily observations.

Mr Walton touched Chinese soil first at Chefoo, whence he visited Wei-hai-wei and then Newchwang. At the latter port he met the Russian advance into China, was conducted by the railway officials over a portion of their line, saw hundreds of men at work putting together Baldwin locomotives—"seventy-eight coming here and seventy-one going to Vladivostock." "The tiffin lasted three hours; we drank the health of the Queen with musical honours. . . . I proposed the health of the Czar, and afterwards we drank each other's health. In short, it was a real Russian welcome."

There also the author interviewed the resident engineer of the Chinese railway destined to become a feeder to the Russo-Manchurian line. "The Newchwang Extension," as it is called, had a special attraction for the traveller, who again and again emphasises the fact that it is being built with British money and by British engineers. He also tells us the line lies beyond the Great Wall, and wholly within the Russian sphere as defined by agreement with the British Government; that the railway is as yet Chinese and beyond British control; that the terms on which the line was financed were "imposed on us" and "dictated by Russia." A practical man studying these conditions on the spot might have been expected to explain, further, how and under what pretences British capital found itself *dans cette galère;* the more so as Lord Salisbury, departing from his declared principle, is understood to have given the bondholders a *quasi* British guarantee for their investment.

Mr Walton was struck by the fact that though New-

chwang is the last foothold for trade that Russia has left us in Manchuria, no British gunboat is stationed there. So when a "European"—presumably English — "was attacked in the native town, the British consul asked the Russians to lend him some Cossacks to rescue the man."

While at Newchwang Mr Walton had an interview with an intelligent Chinese merchant, which is relevant to the present crisis:—

"*Tiffin with Chinamen.*

"One day Dr Daly invited Mr Chen-Yu-Ting, a Chinese merchant here, and a Mr Tong, the secretary of the Newchwang Extension Railway, to tiffin. The former gentleman gave me his views on the present political situation in China. He considers that China may be at any moment on the eve of a great crisis. He described the present Empress-Dowager as having 'tucked the young Emperor under her arm, and won't allow him to move.' She is now sixty-five years of age, and broken in health through being worried with the cares and intrigues necessary to maintain her position. He would not be surprised to hear of her death at any time. When this takes place there will probably be three factions striving for mastery in China. One will be under Jung-Lu, the generalissimo of all the forces in North China and nephew of the Empress-Dowager, who is against reform and is anti-foreign. Another faction might be headed by Kang-Yi, a member of the Grand Council: he and Jung-Lu together broke down the Reform party, but he will play for his own hand if an opportunity arises. The third faction would probably be under the leadership of Prince Ching, now President of the Tsung-li-Yamên: he is a collateral relation of the present Emperor, and is to a certain extent patriotic and in favour of reform. These are all Manchus; and there would still have to be taken into consideration the Cantonese, amongst whom are to be found the majority of the reformers of China, and who might obtain the support of the Chinese generally in a united effort to deprive the Manchus of the governing power in China."

The same gentleman, evidently a Cantonese, thought the British Government should give facilities for the naturalisation of Chinese in British possessions, quoting the example of the French, who manufacture French *protégés* by wholesale in countries which are not French possessions at all.

At Peking our traveller had interesting discussions with a great variety of men of many nationalities. Mr Pethick, who was Li Hung-Chang's interpreter, informed him that the Tsung-li-Yamên have no executive authority. "They hear statements of cases, and then report through their President to the Grand Council of State . . . which is really the Government or Cabinet of the country." Individual members of the Yamên may also be members of the Grand Council, but it is the latter body alone which has access to the throne. The foreign Ministers, having no access to the Grand Council, are unable to approach the Government of China. Hence the impotence of Peking diplomacy.

Interesting talks with Prince Ching, the head of the Tsung-li-Yamên, and Li Hung-Chang, "a notable man whose ability and shrewdness are undoubted," are recorded. Mr Walton had to pass under the familiar ordeal of Li Hung-Chang's catechism, which all inter-

viewers resent. He succeeded, however, in submitting to both the statesmen named a scheme of high policy for China which they received approvingly, but "it is usual for Chinamen to profess to agree with whatever those who interview them say."

Of the British Legation little is said except that "the failure of our representatives to maintain British interests is due to the lack of support on the part of Lord Salisbury, by whose direction every surrender has been made." He censures the British Minister, however, for acquiescing in the *coup d'état* whereby "the deposition of the Emperor in 1898 and the usurpation of the throne by the Empress-Dowager was accomplished." Neither Mr Walton, however, nor any other English writer on this theme, has indicated the kind of machinery which the British Minister might have employed to obstruct that transaction; though he hazards the opinion that Sir Claude Macdonald need not have condoned the offence by allowing his wife to attend a reception given by her Imperial Majesty.

Sir Robert Hart made the same favourable impression on our author as he does on most visitors. "He spoke in the highest terms of the Chinese, and is absolutely devoted to their interests." Mr Walton shares in that good opinion of the race. "The more I see of the Chinese the better I like them," he writes.

A pathetic interest attaches to his interview with the genial Baron von Ketteler, German Minister, who was butchered by the Chinese on June 18.

On a second visit to Wei-hai-wei, where he was hospitably entertained by the British naval officers and others, Mr Walton had a glorious view of "the whole harbour and of the British zone on the mainland"; but so low is his estimate of the management of the station that he advocates abandoning it to the Germans, in order that they may "construct a railway to connect it with Chefoo." But why Germany should particularly wish to connect these two places, while possessing a magnificent port of their own close by, capable of swallowing up both, Mr Walton does not stop to explain.

Port Arthur was next visited, where, after detentions which were duly explained away, he received the usual warm welcome from the Russian authorities. His observations at Kiao-chau are more within the scope of a commercial traveller, and Mr Walton is happy to make himself the medium for promulgating the opinions of the German authorities that Kiao-chau will be open to British trade on precisely the same terms and conditions as to German, and just in the way that British possessions are equally open to German and British traders.

Shanghai naturally pleased Mr Walton very much: the fact that all the Chinese cotton-mills used Barnsley bobbins went straight to his manufacturing heart. "Even the European mills there, although they

buy their bobbins in London, . . . possibly some portions of their requirements are supplied from Barnsley." Throughout his whole long journey Mr Walton is as true to Barnsley as the needle to the pole, and this we say in a spirit the very reverse of disparaging, for it is more Barnsleys, more bobbins, and more Waltons that the country urgently needs.

We have said enough to indicate the quality of this opportune volume, and need not follow the author down the coast, up the Yangtse, and through Japan. The narrative is full of pleasant wayside gossip, under cover of which an immense deal of sound information is conveyed, which we hope may be widely read among the industrial classes.

In his brief concluding chapter on the present crisis, the man of business gets a little *ultra crepidam* in deciding offhand sundry very large questions, and demanding immediate execution thereupon. The merit of this chapter lies mostly in its brevity.

Of a different calibre and on a higher plane is the next volume before us. Whatever else may be said for or against the writings of Mr Colquhoun,[1] there can be no doubt that he takes both himself and his work seriously. He advances no conclusions until he has amassed a solid array of facts to support them,—an order of procedure which, we venture to think, distinguishes him from the majority of those who write for a purpose. Recognising how quickly the surface knowledge—which is all that any European ever acquires concerning the Far East—becomes obsolete, Mr Colquhoun makes it a matter of conscience to return again and again to the fountainhead, and it is this practice which gives value to his successive studies of things Chinese. Though his latest work does not bring us up quite to the eve of the present outbreak, it is nevertheless pregnant with warning of impending calamities, the causes of which he points out with a steady and fearless hand. It seems, therefore, the duty of every adult man in this country to examine the data which Mr Colquhoun so abundantly supplies, and then form opinions of his own on questions which are so closely connected with the welfare of our own and other commercial countries.

In 'China in Transformation,' published two years ago, Mr Colquhoun showed how that country had been shaken by recent events, and prognosticated profound changes which were certain to follow. Little as it was given to any foreigner, however studious, to know of the internal factors fermenting towards revolution, there were outside agencies at work to which Mr Colquhoun has usefully directed his study.

Hitherto it has been the maritime aspect of Chinese affairs which has almost alone engaged

[1] The "Overland" to China. By A. R. Colquhoun. Harpers.

the attention of Great Britain —a partial and inadequate view of the question. The events of the last ten years have compelled us to recognise that there is a landward as well as a seaward side to the dominion of China. The march of events has brought home to us the fact that if the ocean is a great highway, so also is the desert, and that the arena within which the fate of China and of Christendom may be decided is likely to be where no ship can float. The problem of the future in that country is essentially a land problem; and we think, therefore, Mr Colquhoun has been well advised in endeavouring to shift the British point of view.

'The "Overland" to China' is a conscientious study of the country from the north-west, showing the approaches to it, and the long arms that are stretching forward to embrace its huge bulk. The writer travelled from St Petersburg to Peking along the Great Siberian Railway as far as it was then carried — viz., to Irkutsk—and thence by way of the great Mongolian desert to the capital of China. He opens with a lucid study of the gradual conquest of Siberia, an unknown country where discovery and conquest went hand in hand. "As early as the twelfth century the Russians already knew of the Ural Mountain Tartars and their wealth in peltry, and occasionally raided them," and so century after century the "knowing" and the "raiding" have progressed with variable incidents, but without permanent check. The law of nature has been vindicated, the strong has overcome the weak, and primitive tribes have succumbed to those a little better furnished than themselves.

Of Siberia and its products the writer gives a succinct account, which is probably as much as the general reader can assimilate. His chief attention is directed, not to the vast area of fertile Siberia, but to that narrow thread of steel which runs through its whole breadth. The great Siberian railway is shown to be a grand Imperial conception, for the enormous territories of Russia in Asia, extending from the Ural Mountains to the sea of Japan, must lie fallow, unpeopled, unorganised, until something better than a tarantass drawn by shaggy ponies joins up the sections of that 4500 miles of worse than corduroy road.

"The key," says the author, "is good communications. These cover all obstacles to Siberian progress that have ever been adduced—difficulties of transport, prohibitive wages—unscientific methods, deficient capital and organisation, official maladministration. With the iron road awakening the echoes of the vast tracts of solemn forests, where three centuries ago the Tunguz and Buriat might only note the cries of animals scarcely wilder than themselves; and bridging rivers where till yesterday the fisherman's birch-bark canoe alone glided through the solitary reaches, Siberia will be indeed conquered, and, with a steel yoke about her neck, compelled to yield her all: of grain and cattle, furs, and fish, and timber; porphyry and gold; coal, lead, and mercury; silver, copper, and iron, — all the wealth she has, under guard of eternal snow and ice, so long held in trust for future centuries."

But what is true of Siberia is not less true of Eastern Mongolia, of the great Amur and Ussuri region which Russia severed from China forty years ago, and of that immense rich territory still nominally belonging to China, which may perhaps retain its name of Manchuria, through which the great Siberian railway reaches its terminus in the Gulf of Pechili. Not the least of the many services Mr Colquhoun has rendered to the public is the stress which he has laid upon the wealth of that territory:—

"In the eyes of Siberians Manchuria is a paradise. With a climate more moderate than that of Canada, with winters which they speak of with enthusiasm, yet this rich country, the future garden of Siberia and Russia, was dismissed in a sentence by a British official reporting to the Foreign Office. 'Nothing,' said he, 'can be expected, commercially speaking, from Manchuria, a desolate region through which about a thousand miles of the Trans-Siberian will run.'"

With pathetic irony the author reflects that the best information on these countries and the first ideas for developing them have come from British sources:—

"The advantages to be looked for in the construction of railways in Manchuria were first pointed out by the Scotch missionary Williamson, who suggested a line from Talien-wan Bay to Mukden, the whole course rich in minerals, terminating in the pulse- and indigo-producing districts in the north, and thus commanding the entire commerce of the country."

This is the identical line which has been adopted by the Russians.

Mr Colquhoun traversed the Yangtse valley to excellent purpose, and although nothing very flattering to British patriotism is to be extracted from his lucubrations, the truth is nevertheless wholesome, and ought to be known. The British sphere of influence, which was two years ago paraded as a great acquisition for this country and a triumph of Foreign Office diplomacy, Mr Colquhoun, who on this point and most others is in perfect accord with Mr Walton, treats as an audacious myth. This illusory concession "was not a title on which a usurer would have advanced money at fifty per cent interest."

The cloud which broods over the author's mind in connection with the problem of Central China is Anarchy, the spectre which has haunted the friends of China for the last six years. Whether or not Mr Colquhoun's prophylactic be the only or the best one, it is at least shared by most of the residents in these provinces, who consider that the plague of Anarchy, if arrested at all, must be by British inoculation. "What is wanted is the intervention of the British to strengthen the hands of the native authorities, and to prove to them that their own safety lies in keeping order by exercising the power they possess. . . . It is the one thing which can preserve many millions of people from the horrors of Anarchy." Nor would this, in the opinion of our author, be wasted expenditure, for "to improve the condition of the

masses would be promptly productive, and England would receive back her own with usury; . . . to infuse into China a healing and saving influence on a clear financial basis is the white man's burden, which Britain is called upon to take up; . . . but . . . it is a man's job that has to be done."

The present outbreak of what is ominously like official Anarchy lends poignant interest to these vaticinations. The measures suggested by Mr Colquhoun are in fact being tardily applied, but who knows whether the malady is not too far advanced for the preventive remedies to take effect?

Lady travellers have contributed not a little by their picturesque descriptions to the common stock of knowledge about China. The last, but by no means the least, of these vivacious writers paints on a background of sober philosophy. Mrs Scidmore's volume[1] is therefore a fitting supplement to the cursory book of Mr Walton, and the deeper political essays of Mr Colquhoun. An exordium of twelve pages on the "degenerate empire," and a peroration of five pages on the unintelligibility of the Chinese, enclose between them 400 pages of terse and brilliant description of things seen and heard during seven separate visits to the country, covering a period of fifteen years.

The authoress had access to the best foreign sources of information, of the philosophic value of which, however, her estimate is but moderate. "In despair," she says at the end of her book, "at my own changing and deflected vision, I have asked a hundred residents the same questions: Who does know these people? who really understands them? and the direct answers have always been negative."

If some of the facile writers who have not seen the country at all, or not seen a tithe of what Mrs Scidmore has, nor brought a fraction of her intelligence to the study of what they have seen, would but take a leaf out of her book, we might be spared many *jejune* projects of king-making, transfer of capitals, and trifling matters of that sort which fall within the ambient of the arm-chair.

Like her compeers, Mrs Scidmore, while digesting much of the information supplied to her by her foreign guides, leaves also much undigested, which naturally tends to crude judgments. It is a failing inherent in humanity to be most assured on those matters of which it is most ignorant. A concrete example may be cited in the estimates made of the population of China. The figure has jumped in thirty years from three hundred to four hundred millions, for no better reason apparently than that the higher number has become fashionable. No up-to-date orator would think of quoting less. And as with the empire so with the

[1] China: The Long-lived Empire. By E. R. Scidmore. The Century Co.

separate provinces, the populations of which are passed from mouth to mouth (*ore rotundo*) in rolling millions, and accepted as axiomatic truths. Whenever it happens, however, that writers are forced to consider some single town or district within their own observation, the imposing unanimity disappears. Thus the population of Peking, given by Mrs Scidmore as "1,300,000 fanatic foreign-hating Chinese," is set down by Mr Walton, without qualification or reserve, at 700,000.

In Chinese numeration it would appear all that can be reasonably expected of authorities is that they agree as to the ciphers, leaving the digits only as debatable land. Diffidence as to what is partially known, combined with confidence as to what is wholly unknown, seems rather characteristic of writers on China, and for an obvious enough reason. They will repeat with proper misgiving the sayings of a Chinese with whom they have conversed face to face, and whom they have tested by cross-questioning, while they will give out without the least hesitation, not the words, but the secret intents of the heart of those whom they have never seen.

The authoress showed a very just appreciation of the strategical predicament of the foreign diplomats and residents in Peking, to which current events are lending a gruesome significance: "Shut like rats in a trap in a double-walled city."

The "break-up" of China Mrs Scidmore calls a "catch-phrase."

> "It is an old story," she says, "often repeated in this oldest surviving empire of the world. . . . A mere 'break-up' or change of dynasty is nothing new to Confucius' people, and China will continue to break up at intervals for thousands more years to come. That same shibboleth of the handful of reformers of to-day, 'China for the Chinese,' is thousands of years old too, heard each time the empire was exploited by northern Tartars, each time a native dynasty arose. It is raised now, as time-honoured custom ordains, when yet another Tartar conqueror advances from the north, and vital thrusts are being dealt from the south, the east, and from the west. There was a worse state prevailing when Confucius wandered from state to state trying to arouse the rulers and people, and time may have only swung round again for another great moral teacher to rise up, scourge, and lead this certainly chosen people."

The gifted authoress closes her book with a sigh for her long-lived empire:—

> "China is very old, very tired—sick. It craves rest and peace—anything for peace; peace at any price. It does not want to be dragged out into the fierce white light and the contests of the new century. But how can it prevent it? Will it rouse itself from its long paralysis and benumbed sleep, or will it be rudely awakened, broken up this time on a wheel of progress?"

Well, Mrs Scidmore has had her answer, probably not the one she expected. China has dragged itself, not into the white light of open contest, but into the lurid light of Hell. It has roused itself indeed, but it is to an orgie of oriental massacre. Until the fumes of Gehenna have passed away, it will be idle to forecast what the new century may have in store for China and for the world. The Yellow Peril is upon us with a vengeance.

THE PASSING OF SUMMER.

WOODS russet red—
Full fruited orchards and the golden haze,
That round the edges of the short'ning days;
And fresher grows the sultry air at night,
And sharper gleam the starry spears of light
In the blue vault o'erhead—
The year has pass'd its noon, and Summer's sped.

Green glades are crossed
With fairy gossamers, dew-drench'd and fine,
And in the hedgerows berried jewels shine—
Deep purpling sloes, and scarlet of the brier,
While the great beeches flame to sudden fire
At the first touch of frost—
An added glow for every glory lost.

No songsters fill
The air with music; in gay companies
Feather'd explorers hurry towards the seas:
The falling leaves in elfin dances fly,
And fragrant pine-cones drop in hollows dry;
But yet on moor and hill
The heather wears its royal vesture still.

Autumn is here—
A sun-brown'd reaper—strong of arm and fleet,
The ripen'd corn in sheaves about his feet;
The last flower Summer left is on his breast:
"Be still, O patient Earth," he cries, "and rest—
Sleep through dark days and drear
Till Spring shall whisper in thy dreaming ear!"

CHRISTIAN BURKE.

THE WAR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.—X.

BY A MILITARY CONTRIBUTOR.

A VERY FLYING COLUMN — THE HEILBRON CONVOY — AT THE LITTLE CALEDON — WASTAGE — LORD ROBERTS MOVES EAST — THE NEW STRATEGY.

AFTER the capture of Bethlehem, De Wet, with Steyn and his dissolving army, penetrated into the difficult country of the Caledon, a large river forming the boundary between the Orange River Colony and Basutoland; confined throughout by mountains rugged and precipitous, overlooking the valley of the river, and well suited to Boer tactics. Six miles south of Fouriesburg, the latest seat of Mr Steyn's government, is the Little Caledon river, its course nearly parallel to the Caledon, which it joins soon after; itself cramped up in a narrow rock-bound valley; the mountains between inaccessible except by crossing the rivers enclosing them. It was here that the Boers, with their guns, waggons, and a vast number of cattle, found welcome breathing-time after the running fights which De Wet's tactics had forced upon them. But that clever commandant recognised that to be immured in such a natural fastness would mean purely defensive action, to rob him of all that mobility which had rendered his raids possible. He was sufficient of a soldier to see that defensive tactics must fail in the end. True they were the Boer habit, and had been freely used, at first with prominent advantage, to fade out later on into the ignominious spectacle he saw on all sides,—Boers beaten back, sullen and disjointed; simple farmers everywhere on the run; heaven-born commandants discredited fugitives, surrendered or in hiding; himself and Botha alone in the field, a wall of British troops in front of both of them, each one hoping that the other would come in first, "hands up." He had sufficient knowledge of his countrymen to foresee the advantage of Mr Steyn's presence —he had kept him in his company, of late very closely; and now that the ex-President, representing the civil power, was altogether in his hands as representing the military power he decided to use him up to the bitter end.

In the July number, p. 140, the name of the officer who cut the line north of Bloemfontein previous to the occupation of the town by Lord Roberts was given as Major Weston-Hunter. The officer was Major Hunter-Weston, R.E., the same who made attempts on the railroad at Kroonstad and Pretoria.—ED. *B. M.*

So a flying column of 2000 men, absolutely light, carrying the barest necessaries of life, was organised. Each man had a led horse to carry stores; five guns, some light carts, well horsed, to follow and keep up with the rapid marches that he intended, were added. On the 17th July, about ten days after arrival, everything being ready, this column made for Bethlehem, across Stabbert's Nek, on the north, cutting rapidly round Generals Clements and Paget, and riding hard for Lindley; near which place, on the 19th inst., the 3rd cavalry brigade, under temporary command of General Little, caught part of it up, when a fight ensued, the Boers breaking up to disappear vaguely into space. On the same day General Broadwood, with his brigade, who had been also following, came up with another portion, six miles west of Heilbron, and attacked; the darkness only preventing their laager from capture, the Boers again dispersing during the night. A detached party turned up on the night of the 21st inst. near Honig Spruit, thirty miles distant, where they cut the railway and telegraph, and captured a supply train with an escort of 100 men of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in charge of a truck containing specie for Lord Roberts, which had fortunately been detached farther south. The main body crossed the line a little to the north, making for the Vaal in the direction of Potchefstroom, and reached Vredefort on the 22nd inst.; the pursuit capturing some waggons, and following to Reitzburg, where De Wet halted, in a position upon the hills near, his intention being to join the wandering commandos which had reappeared in the western Transvaal, where the hasty surrender of arms and general submission of farmers had been hailed with premature satisfaction.

The importance of frustrating his scheme and capturing him was so apparent that General Ian Hamilton's division was detached from the main army and moved back to Rustenburg, where General Baden-Powell had become invested by Delarey; General Smith-Dorrien's infantry brigade marching south to occupy the railroad north of Potchefstroom; the force under Lord Methuen taking up a position west of Lindeques drift to intercept De Wet attempting to cross the Vaal. Lord Kitchener, who was placed in command of the whole operation, hurried to Reitzburg immediately on the news arriving of the Boers' stand there, and waited, watching them till 6th August, when they began to move their waggons across the Vaal at De Wet's drift, some twelve miles east of the position they had quitted; Lord Kitchener following with his mounted men on the 8th inst., in time to come up with their rearguard and engage it on the following day near Lindeques drift; at the same time that Lord Methuen fought another rearguard action near Buffelshoek, driving the enemy off a succession of hills which they held with great obstinacy, and

capturing some waggons and ambulances.

On the 10th inst. Lord Kitchener at Gatsrand, north of Potchefstroom, got into connection with Lord Methuen at Taaisbosch Spruit, a few miles to the south-west, the enemy flying in front of them in an endeavour to reach the railway at Welvendiend station, twenty-five miles north-east of Potchefstroom; Lord Methuen following so close after as to capture a gun and shell the main body; General Smith-Dorrien's infantry, by forced marches, just failing to anticipate them. On the 13th inst. De Wet, still flying in a northerly direction, felt the pursuit so keenly as to compel him to blow up some waggons of ammunition, to leave behind horses too exhausted to travel the pace, and to permit 60 prisoners to rejoin the British troops. It was evident that he was making every effort to join Delarey with his force, which had now dwindled to 700; the former with about 5000 men expecting him in the hills near Rustenburg—an advance commando, to act as a feeler, having attacked Frederikstadt, a station on the line fifteen miles north of Potchefstroom, on the 3rd inst., to be beaten off by the C.I.V., who were holding the post, with slight loss; but on the 12th inst. the little garrison was so hardly pressed by another attack that they were forced to retire on Blaauwbank, thirty miles farther north.

In the meantime De Wet, by dividing up his force into small bodies and moving at night, which his intimate acquaintance with the country rendered possible, turned sharp to the west, the pursuit still following on, north, which direction he again resumed as soon as clear of Lord Methuen, who had so nearly closed with him. He had now gained the open country, where the farmers, on parole, broke the oath they had taken without delay till he was again at the head of several thousand men, to turn up, with them, on the 17th inst., at Delarey's headquarters in the mountains north of Rustenburg, after just a month's hard riding, with the pick of our army in chase: an object-lesson which our cavalry leaders may well take to heart. What a civilian could do a military man can do also if he is not above learning from a simple farmer. We have horses as good as the Boers,—if not, we can breed them; men as good as they are, if they will take a leaf out of their book. In one thing only they will beat us, for the present—they know the country, and we do not.

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De Wet has been nominated as a master of strategy—say rather of irregular warfare—because he has had the common-sense to grasp the incompetency of his enemies, and take advantage of it. He had his chance when Lord Roberts was compelled to break up his force in the Orange River Colony into many small subdivisions: it must be so when communications have to be maintained. To guard the line alone will require many isolated posts along its 400 miles; con-

voys are pushing up or returning, their escorts tempting an attack; reinforcements are hurrying up to refresh the main army, others to support posts scattered everywhere, all demanding men in command ready to undertake independent action at any moment or under any circumstances. Given common-sense to start upon, these men are asked to bear in mind that they are in an enemy's country where every one is on the enemy's side, — his character to sneak up on the chance to shoot you down if he can, or to run away if he cannot. All the rest can be met by the military proficiency they have achieved from crammers, examinations, text-books, field training, staff college, manœuvres, and other aids to learning.

It is not much to ask that a man should be able to put in practice the rudiments of his profession when the time comes; yet De Wet has come across a great many who cannot. An instance occurred in the capture of the 13th battalion Imperial Yeomanry, three companies of which on the 25th May were in Kroonstad, the Duke of Cambridge's Own marching in from Bloemfontein in the evening after a 15-mile march on short rations. Then a telegram arrived from Lindley, forty-five miles off, ordering them to join General Colvile there by the next night, Saturday. The three companies picked up one day's ration, and started off at 5 P.M. with a convoy of waggons, marching all the forty-five miles on almost empty stomachs, arriving on the afternoon of Sunday to find General Colvile gone, and the town full of Boers. It has been said that Colonel Spragge, in command of the Yeomanry, was to blame for neglecting to ascertain this; but common-sense would tell him that as the general wanted him, it was not necessary to enter the town where he was to meet him with a couple of troopers in front, fifty yards apart, a couple more riding round outside, and others crowning the hills above it, while he himself seized the post-master and examined the mail-bags. It was more natural to ride on in front to report his arrival to the general, and learn what he wanted him for. But General Colvile had left the place that morning at sunrise without a word to the Yeomanry toiling along the road, hungry and dusty; and so Colonel Spragge did the best he could, got into some sort of position, sent off troopers to General Colvile and to General Rundle, and sat down for four days' hard fighting, 370 Yeomen against a couple of thousand Boers.

The messengers reached General Colvile, in camp, eighteen miles on the road to Heilbron, where he said he hoped to arrive to-morrow—sending word to Colonel Spragge, "The enemy are between me and you, and I cannot send back supplies: if you cannot join me by road at Heilbron, you must retire on Kroonstad, living on the country, and, if necessary, abandoning your waggons." The troopers realised this would not re-

lieve their comrades, fighting desperately on a meat lozenge and two spoonfuls of jam in forty-eight hours; so they galloped off to Kroonstad, where Lord Methuen was, who started in half an hour and marched forty-four miles in twenty-five hours, but was too late. Of the two other messengers, one was shot, the other captured: does it require a master of strategy to meet such a pitiful tale of muddle?

The capture of the convoy for the Highland Brigade at Heilbron cannot fairly be put to the credit of De Wet's "masterly strategy," so constricted was the poor helpless thing by the muddle of many masters. It was sent off from Winburg under escort of a company and a half, "odd men" for the brigade, with orders to pick it up at Kroonstad; this being changed afterwards to Heilbron, the convoy to follow by rail to Vredefort Road, and thence by road. The enemy was known to be in the vicinity, and in possession of artillery; but this scratch escort was thought to be sufficient. Arrived at Vredefort Road, it was met with conflicting orders,—to move on Heilbron, and advice by the staff officer there to wait. One authority reported that the escort which was to meet it had already started from Heilbron; while General Macdonald, in command of the Highland Brigade, which was opposed—practically surrounded—for the last five days of its march, wired not to [send it on till it could be escorted by a strong force of mounted troops, infantry, and artillery. So the officer in command laagered up. Suspicion was aroused by the absence of a colonial conductor, who had been sent after some oxen: it was discovered too late that he had given the information to De Wet which led to the capture.

On the night of the 2nd June the convoy moved off, part of the escort, it is said, being asleep in the waggons. Next day some oxen were seen feeding on the flank, a sign of waggons not far off; so the convoy laagered up once more, and an officer sent an orderly a short distance off, to reconnoitre, only to return without having seen anything. A message was sent back to Vredefort Road, where 1000 details had collected, and at 8 A.M. on the 4th inst. an answer came from Major Haig, in command there, that "he had got, with 600 men, within four miles of the convoy." He got two miles nearer and then turned back, hearing that the railhead was threatened. An hour after this was received a flag of truce came in, covering a message from De Wet, "I have 1200 men and 5 guns—surrender at once." An attempt to get terms was refused by De Wet, who saw that the convoy lay in the hollow of his hand, when the whole party capitulated.

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But the escape of De Wet with 2000 burghers was met with many objections by Prinsloo, who had succeeded to the command. His forces consisted of about 8000 Boers, mostly

belonging to local commandos, rendering slight obedience to any commandant but their own. Discipline, always lax amongst them, was entirely lost; the general command itself was disputed by several commandants; and they were unable to reform themselves into an organised support to De Wet, and to despatch another commando, under Roux, as had been agreed upon, to join him; their dissensions delaying the departure of this commando until General Rundle was able to block the passes it was making for. Fouriesburg, round which they were congregated, lies in a somewhat wide basin, through which the Brandwater stream runs to join the Caledon. This basin is enclosed by mountains, pierced by few passes, all of them capable of allowing the Boers time to withdraw their waggons.

General Hunter, who had arrived from the north, divined their object, and formed his plans to meet their own. On the 23rd inst. a simultaneous movement on the passes which led into the valley was made. Of these Retief's and Stabbert's are on the north; Naauwpoort more to the west, with two less important — Golden Gate and Inguwooni; while farther south is Commando Nek. To the east is an almost inaccessible mountain tract, across which waggons could not be hauled. The south is closed by the valley of the Little Caledon, narrow and precipitous. General Hunter attacked Retief's Nek; Generals Clements and Paget, Stabbert's Nek; General B. Hamilton, with General Macdonald, Naauwpoort Nek; and General Rundle, Commando Nek.

General Hunter was opposed with great determination. The first pass was very narrow, the hills on either side rising into mountains, crowded with riflemen: to force it by direct attack was impossible. So the 2nd Black Watch were sent round to attempt to turn it by a precipitous bridle-path; on climbing which the Boers met them with such a well-directed fire as obliged them to creep along under cover of the boulders, till, with great exertion, they gained some outlying kopjes, where they remained till dusk, when in the failing light they took the nek with a rush at the first assault. While this attack was proceeding, the 2nd Royal Sussex and 1st Highland Light Infantry made a direct attack on the main pass; advancing, covered by artillery, across an open plain, under fire from an enemy behind every rock and boulder, till, finding a convenient donga leading to the foot of the pass, they crept into it. But the face was too steep to climb, and the men had to lie still while the Royal Sussex succeeded in clearing the rocks, and clambering up a hill which commanded the pass, to be again foiled by its steepness. So the capture of it had to be abandoned, and the troops retired after dark to the camp from which they started.

Next day the attack by the bridle-path was resumed, assisted by a heavy mist—some

Colonial scouts, with four companies of the Highland Light Infantry, crowning the heights on either side. But the Boers, fearing a night-attack, had left during the night; and the nek was occupied by the Highlanders without a shot being fired. The head of the ravine still remained, in which the Boers took such excellent cover that not a head could be seen. Some artillery fire on both sides was tried, with little effect, till the 2nd Seaforth Highlanders, creeping up, supported by the fire of the Black Watch, got the word to charge at the same moment that some volunteers of the Royal Sussex made a rush across the open, so startling in its audacity that the Boer fire became unsteady, allowing our men to race along unharmed; seeing which, and dreading the bayonet, they turned and fled in a terrible hurry, scattering down the rocky precipices to their ponies. About 250 of them were got up in khaki—on this occasion, fortunately, with no damage to our men from the deception. Their force, numbering about 6000, was followed up by General Hunter to Fouriesburg, which he occupied on the 26th inst., after a series of engagements.

On the 26th General Macdonald, following the Boers, caught up their rearguard nine miles from Naauwpoort, and engaged it from early morning till dark, the result being to effectually block Naauwpoort Nek to the Boer waggons. General Hunter during his advance was twice checked at two neks, both strong positions—one of which was taken before dark, the second during the night without fighting. At Fouriesburg he was joined by Generals Clements and Paget; also by General Rundle, who had arrived with his division on the previous day, after forcing his way through Commando Nek.

The basin of the Brandwater was now in our possession, and the Boers, not being willing to risk an engagement, retreated hastily down the rocks and mountains that enclose the valley of the Little Caledon, expecting to find a way to escape by the two passes leading from it—Naauwpoort Nek and Golden Gate. But General Hunter, again seeing through their intention, had sent General B. Hamilton with his brigade to guard the former; General Macdonald, strongly reinforced, going to Golden Gate; himself advancing through the Caledon valley. The Boers detached a rearguard to oppose him, which, on the 28th inst., he engaged and beat back; Brabant's and Rimington's Scouts moving along the flanks, the infantry attacking in front the Boer position on a hill in the centre of the valley, and on which they had a gun posted. A shot from our 4.7-in. gun put this out of action, and drove off the Boer gunners, who eventually scattered down the reverse slopes,—our troops following them up the valley which they vainly tried to leave, our guns at Naauwpoort Nek and Golden Gate thrusting them back, while the main

body pushed them up in rear. They had forced their way so far into the passes that they could not extricate themselves, twenty miles of the only road was hopelessly blocked by their waggons, and they could not expect to fight successfully so encumbered. A meeting was therefore called, at which Prinsloo advised surrender. This led to much disagreement, the burghers being allowed in the end to do as they pleased: some commandos assented, others were resolute to hold out.

On the morning of the 29th inst., by way of temporising, a flag of truce with a letter was sent asking for a four days' armistice to arrange peace negotiations, which was refused —the only terms offered being unconditional surrender. On this a second letter from Prinsloo came in, offering to give up his men and rifles if they might keep their horses and be free to return to their farms, which was also refused, General Hunter adding that every one who surrendered would be considered as a prisoner of war, and that hostilities would continue till they were defeated or surrendered. This brought matters to a crisis, and Prinsloo to his senses; for soon afterwards he sent in to accept the terms offered, and at 11 A.M. on the 31st inst. came into our camp, accompanied by two commandants and about 1000 men, with their rifles and a 9-pounder gun, besides—what was more important to our men—1400 horses. The Boers rode between two long lines of our troops drawn up on the hills overlooking the valley, and threw down their rifles as they passed. A number of them got away during the night; many more gave themselves up at other camps. Olivier, with 1500 men and five guns, got away, and took up a position outside, in which he declared his intention to fight us, informing General Hamilton that he did not recognise the surrender made by Prinsloo. Altogether, some 4000 men and horses, with three guns, and a vast quantity of ammunition and stores, surrendered.

A difficulty is met with when fighting an enemy who does not consider himself controlled by the laws of civilised warfare. On our side we are bound in honour to observe most strictly the "customs of war." More than that, we are bound to follow the customs of humanity which obtain amongst civilised nations, even to straining a point in favour of the other side which is fighting an irregular, scrappy sort of war, with men held together by the slightest discipline and their own individual instincts; with little or no experience of the ways of civilised people or of such ties as honour, truth, and justice, which knit men together. With them, to be at war is to resort to any expedient, however barbarous, by which they can conquer or get the best of an enemy; and in our treatment of the Boers who have found it convenient to come in, we have deluded ourselves with the idea that every one who is sufficiently civilised to wear a coat

puts it outside a civilised mind and a civilised body. South Africa will have taught us that there are savages who sport trousers.

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Men at home have been so surfeited with successes that they become impatient for more if the current begins to slacken. They count up the days already spent in Pretoria, and whisper round the corner, "Why don't he push on? he's got all his boots, and his trousers, and his horses, and over 200,000 men —surely he might move along with only Botha to stand up against him, and Buller to lend a hand." Now, 200,000 men look very imposing on paper; how do they look on the ground? The army of Lord Roberts is an invading army, subject to innumerable drains, called by military men "wastage." A German writer says that "invading armies melt away like snow."

To explain how this is brought about, the figures in the case of a division which landed at Cape Town in time to take part in the march to Bloemfontein will show. It would have embarked at full war strength 10,000, which, when a battalion detached on landing and loss from sickness are deducted, reached De Kiel's drift in time to accompany the cavalry to the Modder and Bloemfontein only 6854 strong; to still further lose by the way 1526, killed, wounded, and sick: marching in 5328 of the 10,000 men that had landed two months previously. The division had shrunk to a brigade—a wastage of one-half after a month's fighting and marching.

From the total of the original strength one-tenth must be taken, say 20,000 for non-combatants, in addition to the men needed to guard the lines of communication—the principal difficulty to be faced. On this point the country north of the Orange river and of Ladysmith, through which the two lines to Pretoria run, must be considered hostile — the first through the Orange River Colony, 420 miles long; the other, *viâ* Natal, 300 miles,— altogether 700 miles to be guarded; which, at the rate of 4500 men for every 100 miles, will absorb 30,000 more. Shrinkage from sickness, wounds, killed, &c., will amount at least to half the original total, say 100,000, leaving a remainder of 50,000 combatants at the front. Of these, if 12,000 are with General Buller, 10,000 looking after De Wet, and 6000 in garrison at Johannesburg and Pretoria, Lord Roberts is left with 22,000 men available to follow up Botha with his 14,000 mounted men; while of the men with Lord Roberts only a small moiety are mounted. A month previous to the move the household cavalry regiment rode out only 50 strong, the two cavalry brigades numbering barely 1000; while the mounted infantry brigade, originally 5000, could only muster 1400. All the time the line in rear lengthened daily: it is 140 miles to Machadodorp, every mile requiring guards to be dropped.

The figures are rough, but in round numbers sufficiently correct to show how men are swallowed up in a campaign. The longer it continues the more capacious its swallow, as the Boers know very well; hence the guerilla warfare they have initiated as a delaying factor, and one difficult to meet in an extended region with a limited force, a small part mounted, and that badly, many on "wretched Argentines," half fed on strange forage in a strange country, handicapped by the weight their riders have to carry, galloping after an enemy born in the saddle, with a "graceful seat showing his complete sympathy with his mount," a hardy pony knowing the country as well as does his master, and accustomed to pick up a meal wherever he may chance to be. As Burnham the scout says, "If a mounted Boer had half a mile start, it was practically impossible for an English trooper to overtake him. It was more likely that the Boer would increase the intervening distance." And to add to the going-power of the Boer pony over our cavalry horses is the ridiculous weight with which the latter are loaded, every ounce detracting from speed and staying-power—18 stone of man, to fight, and dead weight to crush. Will it never dawn upon War Office armchairs that the days of the heavy dragoon with his "shock-action" and his trotting past spectators went out with Brown Bess and other theatricals? Men with African experience have told us when winter comes that we shall be even with the Boers. There will be no grass, they can't carry forage, and their ponies will die or be too weak to gallop. Winter has come, but they still out-gallop our horses, whose forage is carried for them.

It was known that the capture of a convoy just as General French started on his ride to Kimberley resulted in half rations for man and horse and a large percentage of deaths in the subsequent ride to Bloemfontein. A correspondent who was at Paardeberg says this was due to the department concerned not having made preparations for giving the horses sufficient rations to keep them alive: 6 lb. oats and 4 lb. of hay will hardly keep a horse in condition to do his daily jog-trot round the park, yet that was considered enough for the horses that set out to gallop after the Boers to Bloemfontein:—

"The Cavalry Division had arrived at Paardeberg reduced in numbers, but still a fine fighting force; there was no grazing there, and the horses had to put up with the rations. Many died, and when they left for Poplar Grove the cavalry horses could scarcely raise a trot, and that only for short distances; the R.H.A. could merely crawl. Both Kruger and Steyn were there; the Boer army, with guns, retreated within view of us in the open; with three or four miles' start they were as safe from our starved cavalry as an express train from a donkey cart. After we left Paardeberg there were hundreds of sacks of oats and other forage there that had to be burnt, because there was not sufficient transport to carry them along; tons of forage being burnt, and horses having

been starved to death close by! Officers commanding cavalry and R.H.A. continually protested that their horses were being starved, and could not live on the meagre rations allotted; and the question was then referred to the headquarters of the department responsible, but no changes were made till nearly all the horses had died, when fresh estimates were called for."

But the A.S.C. have been, with the A.M.D., granted full military titles: "the shoemaker to his last" used to be good enough.

But some dribble of the reinforcements which had constantly arrived from home began to show itself in Pretoria, together with the much-needed remounts; and on the 17th July, after seven weeks spent in setting matters straight in the captured town, and recuperating his forces after their vigorous march, Lord Roberts found himself in a position to move out east in continuation of his main advance. The troops to take part in it had been holding the positions near Merve which were captured from the Boers on the 11th June, and on the 23rd July the advance began. General Ian Hamilton, with a division made up of the brigade under Smith-Dorrien, one newly formed under Colonel Cunningham, and Colonel Mahon's cavalry brigade, moved along the country to the north of the Delagoa Bay railway. General Pole-Carew, with the 11th Division, accompanied by General Stephenson's brigade, in the centre, kept to the railway. General French, with the cavalry division, and mounted infantry under General Hutton, marched parallel to it on the south.

The advance was practically unopposed, the Boers falling back on the appearance of our troops. A stand was made against our right on the 24th inst., but a wide turning movement to the south by the cavalry put the Boers to flight, followed by the mounted men as far as Oliphant's river. On the 25th Lord Roberts had his headquarters at Balmoral, which had been occupied for some time for the same purpose by Botha. From the high ground which the pursuing cavalry reached they looked down on Middelburg, through which the enemy were seen retreating in the utmost disorder. The next morning General French occupied the town without opposition, and took up a strong position in anticipation of its use as a base in advance of Pretoria, leaving the 11th division to guard his communications with that place. With him was left the Naval Brigade, the guns being posted in commanding positions in anticipation of his farther move east.

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The defeat of the Boers in the valley of the Caledon released General Buller from the uncongenial task of sitting still on the wall between two Boer commandants, leaving him free to co-operate with Lord Roberts; and on the 7th inst. he left Paardekop, in a north-easterly direction, across the open veldt; Botha, who was opposing him with 2000 Boers and six guns, contenting himself with divid-

ing them into small parties to skirmish round his flanks, always ready to fall back before General Dundonald with his mounted men, preceded by Strathcona's Scouts; the regular cavalry, assisted by the R.H.A., driving them off from the opposite flank. As before, elaborate preparations had been made to receive us by intrenching positions across the road, but the numerous trenches were invariably deserted on the approach of infantry. The general advance was made on a front of as much as twenty miles — a precaution rendered necessary by the amount of hidden ground to be searched.

Later on in the evening of the same day the troops marched into Amersfoort, eighteen miles north of their starting-point—a creditable distance for men to accomplish after such a long period of inaction. On the 10th inst. the Vaal was reached, here an inconsiderable stream between rocky banks, where the Boers could have met our troops, while crossing, with good effect. But the drift was deserted—a little skirmishing the only token of the presence of an enemy. On the 12th inst. the cavalry in advance rode into Ermelo, the main body following next day; the Boers having passed through the village two days previously on their way to Machadodorp. On the evening of the 14th inst. the cavalry gained touch with General Gordon's scouts, pushed forward in front of the main column; General Buller encamping next day twenty miles south of Wonderfontein, a station on the Delagoa Bay railway, twenty-five miles east of Middelburg, and the most advanced point held by Lord Roberts. The two portions of his army being now in touch, it was possible to continue the advance, which had been checked at Middelburg while supplies were replenished and everything set in order in the camps.

These continual checks, happening in between Lord Roberts's movements, call up the question whether this new departure in strategy, initiated by him, is altogether as successful as the old-fashioned method which military nations have been accustomed to follow out ever since the memory of man; where no stage in advance was taken till the rear was secured either by the destruction of the enemy's armies in that quarter or the dropping of garrisons sufficiently numerous to discourage attempts at a fresh outbreak. The advance, once begun, moved slowly but surely, leaving the country in rear of it utterly subjugated, to assure the passage of communications. Lord Roberts, on the other hand, moves swiftly, striking his blows with lightning rapidity, trusting to the unexpectedness of the shock to paralyse any further opposition. And this method would have great advantages if it were attempted anywhere else than in such a vast country of unmanageable distances as South Africa. Distance means time, always on the side of the defenders, —time to recover, time to re-

organise, time to look about, and the ever-lengthening distance between themselves and the enemy to obscure, only too quickly, the vigour of the blow under which they have bent.

If the war could have been ended by the occupation of Bloemfontein, everything might have been risked; but with this boasted British army hopelessly stranded at the first stopping-place on the road to victory, full in front of the Boers' eyes, the glamour of that luminous strategic feat dimmed out very quickly—to reappear at Kroonstad, and again, most forcibly, at Pretoria. A succession of blows are most telling in attack, but they must be continuous—no pause permitted between; and to ensure this, human nature must be consulted. Horses cannot go for ever; stores, ammunition, food, and clothes must follow, rapidly also, along lines congested with traffic; wounded have to go back, fresh men to come on, and all the while an enemy recovering his courage, eager to snatch at any one of the hundred chances of reprisal which he sees around him; desperate with the remembrance of what the invader has done to his own home here, and is still doing to his friends' homes miles away. As the boys say when on the look-out for the farmer's apples, just as he has turned the corner, "He can't see us—let's do it again!"

SOME NEEDS OF THE NAVY.

WHETHER the outlook for the British empire is at present a more stormy one than, say, six months ago, is a question that only very few, if any, can answer; but there can be no possible doubt that it would be the height of rashness not to look most carefully into the state of our defences, when, with scarcely an exception, all our European neighbours are at no pains to conceal their ill-will. Such a temperate statesman as Lord Salisbury has gone so far as to earnestly exhort the members of the Primrose League to be forward in promoting the formation of rifle clubs and similar military measures which must be mainly useful, not for the defence of our shores, but for the repulse of the enemy after the defence of our shores has failed, and his armies have obtained a footing on British territory, such as could only be obtained owing to the failure of the navy to prevent a landing.

But the necessity or otherwise of rifle clubs and similar organisations is not the subject-matter of discussion. In any case, in order to safeguard the dominions of our Queen, a thoroughly efficient navy is absolutely indispensable, and it is above all things desirable that any needs that the navy may own to should be made good without delay. In the case of the land forces of the Crown it may fairly be assumed that some little time will be available for organisation and preparation before the storm-clouds of war actually break over our land, but this time of grace must in great measure depend on the preparedness of the navy. If the navy is at all times ready for any emergency, invasion should never come at all, and our troops will only be required for offensive action beyond the seas. But if the navy, and especially that part of it stationed in European waters, be caught unprepared, the most serious consequences must needs follow.

All this may appear to be a self-evident truism, and it is undoubtedly the case that infinitely more attention is now paid in the navy to immediate readiness for any emergency than was the case, say, fifteen or twenty years ago. Still, the question is not, Have we made any improvement? but rather, Is there anything still undone that we ought to have done?

Notwithstanding the remarkable changes both in men and material that have taken place afloat during the nineteenth century, the navy remains one of the most conservative institutions existing. So much is this the case that the arrangements for manning our ships in the present day are mainly based on the conditions of, say, a hundred and fifty years ago, which conditions have altered most radically and materially in nearly every respect. In the

middle of the eighteenth century the standing navy was an extremely small force. It is true that a considerable number of ships existed which were laid up in our home ports, but these ships were not in any sense complete. They lacked motive-power and armament, having neither masts, rigging, nor guns, and could not be rigged until the men were procured to carry out the work. The men in question had in some cases been employed in the navy previously, either in war or in peace, and having been paid off, were now employed in the merchant service or had got something to do on shore. So they had to be collected as quickly as possible, some by voluntary enlistment, whilst others, and many landsmen with them, were rushed on board by the pressgang. Officers were entered from half-pay, from the merchant service, and (mainly youngsters) from the shore, and in course of three or four months, or perhaps more, the ship was rigged, armed, and completed for sea. Thus if the fleet was ready for sea within three months after the declaration of war, it was considered a very creditable performance. It was a necessity of this system that the officers and men who formed the crew of a ship must needs be strangers to each other and to the ship; but this evil was in measure obviated by the fact that there was the time of fitting out to shake down in, and when ready for sea the crew was already fairly efficient, and having rigged the ship under the guidance of their officers, mutual confidence had been established between officers and men.

In the present day, in lieu of three months being available for preparations after the outbreak of war, we shall not have three days. Indeed all should be ready some time before the declaration of war. But although it is fully understood that it is necessary to be more prepared than were our predecessors, we still start from the same kind of basis. Ships and men now in reserve at home, but which would all be required for service on the outbreak of war, are in peace-time kept entirely apart, and when the ships are commissioned, the crew has to be organised from the very beginning. A state of confusion and unreadiness on commissioning is apparently regarded as a sound constitutional basis from which all improvements must needs start. Still, it is evident that we do not feel altogether comfortable, for certain reforms have recently taken place in the time-honoured procedure of our ancestors. Thus, instead of the ships being kept incomplete and requiring much work before they are ready for sea, the aim now is to have every ship in the Fleet Reserve thoroughly equipped in all particulars, so that immediately the men come on board she can put to sea without delay. Again, in lieu of depending on the enlistment of merchant seamen or men from the shore, we now keep a very large body of men permanently enlisted, so as to be able to man our ships

on the shortest notice. The system of keeping up a large permanent force for manning the navy dates from the close of the Crimean war; but the system has only been fully developed within the last few years. Only fifteen years ago we were content with 57,000 men actually serving. This year the numbers have risen to 114,000, much the largest force ever employed in any navy in time of peace, and considerably exceeding the war numbers with which we had to be content in the earlier years of the great struggle which closed the eighteenth century. But notwithstanding the enormous number of men now maintained on a peace-footing, we have not yet managed to surmount all the difficulties inherited from our predecessors, and which seem almost inseparable from the system of keeping a considerable number of ships without any crews in time of peace. For such a display as the great Review of 1897 we managed to man our ships, and we can get most of those in the Fleet Reserve to sea for the manœuvres; but every one concerned knows full well that these hastily manned ships cannot compare in efficiency with those that have been some months in commission.

On every station there are a few vessels, commonly known as newly commissioned ships, which are not expected to compete on equal terms with those whose officers and men know each other thoroughly, and it commonly happens that in general exercises these ships fall considerably behind the remainder. Still on the foreign stations these newly commissioned ships form a comparatively insignificant minority, and the general efficiency of the squadrons is not much affected by their presence. But if we come to home waters we find a very different state of affairs. When, as in the annual manœuvres, a large assemblage of ships takes place in home waters, a very considerable proportion of these must needs be manned by scratch crews, who cannot have much confidence in their officers or shipmates, because all are utter strangers to each other. It is on these hastily manned ships that we shall have in great measure to depend on the sudden outbreak of war. The ships off the coast of Australia, of British Columbia, or South Africa may be splendidly manned; but this would be very cold comfort to an admiral charged with the duty of holding the narrow seas against all comers, threatened as he probably would be by the fleets of two allies whom he would find it most difficult to keep from effecting a junction. "If only I had three months to shake officers and men together," would be the regretful soliloquy of such an officer. But there would be no time for sentiment, and the only thing to do would be to make the best of a somewhat unsatisfactory assemblage of ships fairly manned, but whose junior officers especially would be distinctly below the average of those on foreign stations.

If the individual ships comprising our fleet in home waters, and the officers and men who form their crews, cannot be considered as likely to be fully efficient on a sudden emergency, what is to be said of the fleet into which they would be organised? In time of peace we keep two fleets in European waters, of which the most powerful is always in the Mediterranean, whilst the other, of slightly inferior force, constitutes "the Channel Squadron." For some years past the Mediterranean Fleet has been very decidedly inferior to the combined French and Russian fleets stationed within the Straits of Gibraltar. The inferiority is mainly in battleships, of which the allies number some seventeen to our twelve. Therefore it is said in some quarters, Then the Mediterranean Fleet must be reinforced by the Channel Squadron. But if this is done, the departure of the Channel ships would leave us dangerously weak in home waters, and the only solution would seem to be to split up the Channel Squadron, sending a portion to the Mediterranean and keeping a portion in home waters, which might be reinforced by the battleships usually to be found in the dockyards, practically ready for sea but not quite complete in every respect. We should then have a fine body of ships in the Mediterranean, of which two-thirds had been exercised together in peace under the admirals who would command in war, whilst the remainder would at any rate be thoroughly exercised in fleet tactics, and would be under a rear-admiral, with whom as second in command in the Channel they would be perfectly familiar. But what would be the case in the Channel? Here we should find the admiral commanding the Channel Squadron with half his ships detached to the Mediterranean, their places being taken by newly commissioned ships. And there would also be the Reserve Fleet. This somewhat heterogeneous gathering of decidedly old-fashioned ships is supposed to constitute our third fleet, and if a junction between the French at Cherbourg and the Russians in the Baltic is to be prevented, the Reserve Fleet must most certainly be used to reinforce the Channel Squadron. But what a sorry reinforcement. The Channel Squadron cruises all the year round under its own two flag-officers. It consists of our newest and best ships, under smart and rising young officers. There is keen rivalry between the ships, which, being continually exercised at sea in company, not only learn to work together, but, more important still, a strong spirit of comradeship is established between the officers and men and their fellows in other ships, so that the squadron is in every sense efficient as a fleet, and can be counted upon to carry out its admiral's intentions, be the circumstances never so trying. It seems almost inevitable that this splendid force must be divided, and the portion left at home amalgamated with the Reserve Fleet. The Reserve Fleet is scarcely worthy of such

are to be found there. But still the gunnery school at its best can never make a man into a seaman; and even here the staff of officers is insufficient, so that the men do not come into the same close contact with their officers as they do on board ship, and cannot be expected to acquire those invaluable qualities that distinguish the seaman-gunner from the highly trained garrison artilleryman. The gunnery school alone can never make a man an efficient seaman-gunner: he must be a seaman first; and, as a matter of fact, no man who has not been rated A.B. in a seagoing ship is received for instruction in the gunnery schools.

A good deal has been said and written lately as to the need of reform in the organisation and treatment of the marines; but the marines are better circumstanced as regards shore training than are the seamen or stokers. The marine corps is in many respects a perfectly unique one. It is a thoroughly British institution, utterly illogical in a sense,—a survival from other times when the navy was an entirely different service from what it is at present, and when amidst a large number of short-service and often ill-disciplined seamen the marines provided the solid backbone of a permanent long-service highly disciplined corps. In those old days one great merit of the long-service marine was that he was always available when even the press-gang could procure no bluejackets, and the services of these soldier seamen were thus of inestimable value in the old wars. Much if not all of this has now completely changed; the bluejackets are also formed into a long-service corps, they are quite as well disciplined as the marines, and being quartered in barracks just as the marines are when not required afloat, they are equally available for manning a ship that may require a crew suddenly. Of much that has been said and written lately as to the duties and status of the marines, a good deal might as well have been left unsaid or unwritten. I do not believe that discontent has been created in this gallant and devoted corps; but this is not due to the forbearance of some of those who have taken part in recent discussions. However, some things have been made clear by these debates and by the occurrences which gave rise to them. The marines may possibly be soldiers, but they do not in any sense belong to the army. The campaign at the Cape has demonstrated this fact. In many of our recent wars, and notably in Egypt, the marines have been employed just as if they belonged to the army. A considerable number were sent out from home under their own officers, and they not only fought side by side with the soldiers under a soldier general, but they formed part of the expeditionary force which the War Office assigned for the conduct of the war, and were practically for the time being enrolled in the army. We were never so hard pressed for men

in the Egyptian campaigns as we have been at the Cape, but no marines were sent out from England to form part of the expeditionary force in this war. The reason is clear. The marines belong to the navy, and the navy could not spare them. Certain ships at home would have required crews if affairs had taken a different turn, and the marines formed an essential part of these crews. But if the marines are not intended for fighting as soldiers, why are they styled soldiers, drilled as soldiers, and dressed as soldiers? Mainly from historical and traditional reasons. The idea that when it is required to land men from ships for fighting on shore the marines, and the marines only, are the men to send, is being rapidly exploded. It is not right to land our ships' companies for fighting on shore unless the emergency is such that no other men are available. And on such an emergency arising the men on the spot must be landed, and that speedily. Bluejackets, marines, and stokers have all been landed recently with excellent results, and it cannot be said that any one corps has specially distinguished itself more than any other. A good deal of misunderstanding exists because the marines are styled either infantry or artillery, and some of their advocates have put forward the plea that when infantry are required from a ship marine infantry should be sent, and when artillery are required marine artillery; and much complaint has been made because bluejackets have been sent either in addition to or in lieu of the marines. To begin with, whatever they may be styled, all marines are in fact artillery. Their main and principal duty is to man and fight ships' guns, and their principal drills when afloat are therefore gun drills. Much of their drill on shore is also in sheds fitted to resemble the gun-decks of a ship. The amount of infantry drill done by the marines is not very great, and from the position of the barracks, far removed from open ground, where alone the modern infantry-man can learn his duties properly, such infantry training as they get is of a somewhat out-of-date character. Many bluejackets in every ship have gone through as much infantry drill as the average marine; and even when, like the marines, they may have been landed for active service before they have had many opportunities of exercise in the field, the quickness and handiness of the bluejacket, together with his readiness and resource, render him a very fair skirmisher under modern conditions. An idea prevails that in a modern mastless ship the duties of marines and bluejackets are similar. This is very far, indeed, from being the case. All work that requires special agility, handiness, or intelligence is assigned to the bluejackets, whilst the marines take the heavier work where a certain amount of stupidity is permissible. In coaling, for example, the bluejackets rig and erect the vari-

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ous derricks, arrange the lead of the whips, hook on and guide the bags, whilst the marines simply do porters' work in wheeling barrows about. Everything in connection with the torpedo-nets —such as fitting them, securing them, placing booms, &c.— is assigned to the bluejackets. The marines do the heavy work of tricing them up. No marine is employed in lowering or working a boat, or in working anchors or cables. Moreover, as the marine officer takes no part in many of the ship's exercises in which the marines are employed, it happens that during much of the marine's time he is acting under the orders of naval officers, and scarcely comes under his own officers at all. In many of the smaller ships marines are carried but no marine officer. It has been said that it is an improper thing that marines when on shore should be under the orders of naval officers; but on board ship this is rather the rule than the exception, and in many cases marines have been more in the habit of obeying and looking up to naval officers than to their own. What is needed with reference to the marine corps is not a wider separation from the seamen, but rather that the marine should be allowed to undertake more of those duties which tend to give the bluejacket his handiness.

The case of the marine officer is doubtless in many respects a hard one, and it is rather to be wondered at that we obtain such excellent candidates for the post of marine subaltern. Briefly, the fact is that no marine officer has any chance of rising to a command save of barracks ashore. His fighting is done on board ship, and here, whatever his standing, his duties in action are on a par with those of the youngest naval lieutenant or sub-lieutenant. He simply has charge of one or more guns, but has nothing whatever to do with the conduct of the ship, either in peace or war. He is never allowed to exercise authority over bluejackets, and indeed his duties on board are of such a light character that it must often be very hard to stave off ennui. Ashore in barracks he has much more to do, and, as pointed out above, the training in the marine barracks, though in great measure confined to soldiering, has a much better effect on the discipline and general bearing of the men, than has the training, such as it is, of the bluejackets and stokers in their depot barracks. The proportion of marine officers serving on shore is greater than that of naval officers, and there is no stigma attaching to a young marine officer who is serving ashore, as there is to a young lieutenant in a harbour ship. Whether the status and prospects of marine officers, especially when serving on board ship, is capable of improvement without making revolutionary changes is a very open question. From the point of view of the Admiralty the junior officers of marines provide a number of excellent officers of the quarters, and

when they pass forty years of age they disappear from the service afloat, and do not embarrass the powers that be by adding to the numerous claimants to the command of a ship. If it was decided to abolish the marines as a separate corps, and gradually to absorb the officers amongst the naval executive, the struggle for promotion would be far more severe than it is at present, and grey-haired commanders would tend to become the rule instead of the exception.

If the method of entering marines was assimilated to that under which the bluejackets are entered, the corps would be a more expensive one, and it is quite possible that we should not obtain such a good class of recruit. In fact, the great argument for the retention of the marines in their present position is that the corps, as now constituted, attracts excellent material, both in the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks; the training is sufficient to turn them into good gunners, and though there are many parts of a seaman's duty that they are not trained to perform, they are so useful generally on board ship, that all those who know them would be extremely sorry to hear that the corps was to be abolished. If, in common with the bluejacket and stoker, they need more service at sea, this can only be arranged for by increasing the number of seagoing ships.

Why should not the number of seagoing ships be increased? So far as the writer is aware, expense, though an important factor, is not the principal reason. The modern ship deteriorates fully as rapidly when in reserve as when in commission. The men have to be paid just the same whether lodged in barracks or serving in a ship. It is true that coals and other stores are used in a commissioned ship which would be saved if she was relegated to the dockyard basin; but it would be the most misplaced parsimony to save a few thousands in this way, whilst the crew, on which the fighting strength of the ship must mainly depend, was deteriorating in the barracks. It is true that a limited number of officers would have to be placed on full pay who are now vegetating on shore on half-pay, and some trifling expense would thus be incurred, but no money could possibly be better spent. The half-pay system is utterly indefensible. In these days it is absolutely essential that officers be kept up to the mark by being constantly employed, and any system that relegates officers to the shore is not worth considering for a force like the navy, which must be ready at any moment to act, and that promptly.

But another objection would be that there are not sufficient officers available to commission the ships now in the Fleet Reserve; and if it is necessary, as it assuredly should be, to have a further number ready to man ships undergoing extensive repairs or which are not quite complete, the number is ut-

terly insufficient. This objection must be sorrowfully admitted to be extremely well founded. For the annual manœuvres we get together with much difficulty a bare sufficiency of lieutenants for a proportion only of the ships in reserve, and if it was required to commission every ship fit to fight, not only would the actual number be insufficient, but, in more ways than one, they would often be the scrapings of the service. And yet it is on these home ships that the first brunt of war would probbably fall, and it might rest upon them to uphold the honour of the empire in a harder fight than that when Philip's hastily manned Armada was scattered and dispersed, owing to the greater preparedness and superior efficiency of the British navy.

At present the watch-keeping officers and officers of the quarters in the ships mobilised for the manœuvres are mainly drawn from shore barracks and training establishments. As there are no midshipmen available, because they are all in seagoing ships, these ships have to do without, and yet in the modern ship with isolated gun positions a senior midshipman, who has had from two to four years' sea service, is found to be most useful; and every one would admit that even the well-trained Mediterranean Fleet would suffer materially were all the midshipmen taken away. It comes doubly hard, therefore, on a mobilised ship, which, from the fact that all hands are strangers to each other, can less afford to go short of officers than can a ship which has been some months or years in commission.

If we are to make the best use of our limited supply of officers, it appears inevitable that some new system of apportioning officers to the various ships should be devised. Under our present system we commission for sea service not much more than half the ships appearing on the Navy List. To these ships are appointed the pick of our officers in the senior ranks, and some three-fourths of all those in the junior ranks. At least a quarter of these ships are likely, on the outbreak of war, to be far removed from the principal theatre of operations, and they may very possibly be detained on their distant stations by political or other non-military considerations. Although a proportion of the seagoing ships are newly commissioned, and the officers and men are strangers to each other, the numbers are not great, and they are generally in first-rate order. It is the seagoing ships that are to the fore in peace-time; and the navy and the country are justly proud of this portion of our fighting force, which is generally considered to fairly represent the whole British navy. But this, unfortunately, it does not really do. Such ships, for example, as those at the Cape or in China are decidedly superior in almost every respect to those which would be first available to oppose our antagonists in a European con-

flict at home; and the constant contemplation of our seagoing ships, and these only, tends to let us drift into a fool's paradise.

The officers not in seagoing ships are in harbour ships or are employed on shore, whilst some are unemployed, and many (Naval Reserve) are in merchant ships. On serious complications ensuing in European waters, these officers would be hurriedly drafted off to ships with which they were generally unfamiliar. On arriving on board they would find that the crew were utter strangers both to their officers, their ship, and each other. A fleet would have to be hurriedly organised from such unpromising materials, and this fleet would have to oppose the efforts of the picked ships of the enemy; for it seems improbable that his less efficient ships would venture out of port at the outbreak of war, unless indeed we were altogether unready. Thus a severe blow might be struck, and our position might be seriously compromised—not because we had not the ships, the officers, and the men, but because our system did not admit of their doing themselves and their country justice on a sudden emergency.

It has for some time been officially acknowledged that our shipbuilding programme is based in great measure on the progress of our rivals, and that it is the deliberate intention of the authorities never to fall behind the aggregate forces of any two possible opponents. It is not too much to ask that the distribution and appointments of our officers should also be arranged with a distinct view to possible complications, and that on every station, not only abroad, but, more important still, at home, all should be prepared for any emergency. The initiation of such a policy would entail the sending home of a certain proportion of officers now serving abroad, and it might also cause the despatch abroad to unimportant stations of some officers who would much prefer to vegetate at home. But it is just this vegetation at home that must be diligently fought against. There is no good and sufficient reason why the whole of the force at home should not be maintained in thorough fighting order, ready to engage a possible enemy (and possible enemies are not so numerous that a shrewd guess cannot be made as to their identity), who should not be given a moment's grace.

I have mentioned the officers first, and having begun with the officers, it is natural to go to the top of the tree. Three most distinguished officers fly their flags as "commanders-in-chief of her Majesty's ships and vessels employed or to be employed" on the three stations into which the waters surrounding our own coasts are divided. But these officers never go to sea—they live in official residences provided for them ashore: the flag of the commander-in-chief who ranks highest flies on board

Nelson's old Victory at Portsmouth; and though at Devonport and Sheerness the flag-ships are fighting ships, the admiral never goes to sea in them: he always remains ashore, and if his flag-ship goes to sea he transfers his flag to some non-fighting ship. Nevertheless, the official formula above quoted, which gives these officers jurisdiction over all ships in home waters, is by no means a dead letter; the officers in question are capable and energetic, and will by no means surrender their rightful authority to any junior. The ships and vessels in British waters are most distinctly under their orders, and if some outsider, say the senior officer commanding the Channel Squadron (for this splendid body of ships is not allowed a commander-in-chief), brings his fleet into one of its natural base-ports, and therefore under the eye of the commander-in-chief, his authority over his own ships lapses. As a matter of fact, owing mainly to the zeal for the service which at present animates all ranks in the navy, and to the circumstance that at no period in our history has there been more cordial co-operation and less jealousy between officers, this system of command, or want of system, does not produce all the evils that might be expected. But it does seriously militate against the mutual efficiency of the base-ports and the ships supplied from them. The officer responsible for the efficiency of the seagoing Channel Fleet has no jurisdiction over the ports where supplies must be obtained and repairs effected in war-time; and, on the other hand, the officer in command at the base-port having practically no personal interest in the efficiency of the ships which put into his port for supplies, has none of the inducements to perfect all the arrangements possessed by, say, the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, who has the whole, both ships and port, under his control.

As an instance of the gulf that exists at home between the seagoing fleet on the one hand and the base-ports on the other, it is a notable fact that the special place of assembly of our seagoing fighting ships at home—Portland—is absolutely devoid of all facilities for repairs of the simplest kind, and the coaling arrangements both there and elsewhere in home waters are such as no commander-in-chief abroad would tolerate for a moment at a port over which he held sway. When the annual manœuvres take place the ships actively engaged must above all things keep clear of the true base-ports. Fictitious base-ports are established, with dummy defences and mythical repairing facilities, the rottenness of which latter are speedily shown directly a ship really breaks down, for she then has to fall back on the true base-port; but in so doing she passes out of the jurisdiction of the seagoing admiral, and in fact ceases to belong to the active fleet. Similarly the coal required for the contending fleets is not shipped or supplied from the depots at the fortified

ports, but is procured from the mainly unfortified commercial docks, built and equipped for the ordinary peaceful coal-trade.

It will perhaps be urged that all these arrangements in the way of command have stood the test of time, and that in the great wars of a hundred years ago we had the commanders-in-chief at the home ports very much as at present. This is undoubtedly true; but the arrangements that worked fairly well in the old days must inevitably be ill-suited to present conditions. The ship of old was practically self-contained when once equipped for sea. She could and did continue in fighting trim for years together without once resorting to a regular base-port for repairs or supplies. The repairs were effected on board, and commonly at sea; the supplies were mainly food and water, procurable almost anywhere, and shipped at sea without insurmountable difficulties.

Moreover, the means of locomotion and communication were so slow and uncertain that when a ship left her port of fitting out she appeared there no more. Her simple needs were supplied elsewhere, nearer to the enemy's coasts, and when it was beyond the competence of her crew to keep her seaworthy her defects would have become so serious that, with all the dockyard appliances available, it was impossible to get her to sea promptly. Indeed, in those days there were few if any dockyard appliances such as are absolutely necessary in the present day for making good a ship's defects. Docking was seldom needed, and everything else was simply a matter of employing so many shipwrights and riggers, these latter being frequently superannuated seamen.

It is a self-evident fact that in war the most important officers in a fighting force are those who command the mobile forces, ready to go anywhere and do anything. If a fighting force is to be thoroughly prepared in peace-time for its war duties, it is, before all things, essential that the organisation should be suited to war needs. The officers who will, in war, be pre-eminent from their position and importance should also have great power and high office in time of peace. All this is arranged for on foreign stations, but hitherto it has not been the case in home waters. When these arrangements were made the admiral blockading Brest, though less than 200 miles from a home port, was practically quite as far away and far more difficult to communicate with than is the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean at the present day. Indeed, the passage to Ushant of the old sailing-ships often exceeded in length the steam passage to Gibraltar now. A modern fleet could well reach Malta as quickly as the northern part of the Bay of Biscay was reached in old days. We have made great strides in the material improvement of our ports, in order that the wants of our home fleets may be supplied; but there is still a great deal to do, if all is to be placed in a thorough state of organ-

isation to meet the needs of the present day. One of the greatest needs is that there should no longer be the sharp line of demarcation that exists between the system of command at home and abroad. If it is reasonable and right that the active service afloat should on our distant stations take precedence of, and if necessary exercise jurisdiction over, the more sedentary service at the ports, so it should be at home. Once this principle was established, much would follow as a matter of course. There would be as much smartness and activity in our home ports as there is abroad. It would be no longer considered derogatory to belong to a ship in home waters, the harbour ships would disappear, and though there might be no material increase in the nominal strength of the navy, the actual fighting value would be greatly enhanced.

Another anomaly would disappear. At present we have in commission in home waters some thirty destroyers. These somewhat fragile craft cannot be worked for any time even in peace without a repairing port under their lee, and must needs therefore come under the jurisdiction of the commanders-in-chief. As a result it follows that they have nothing to do with the seagoing ships of the Channel and Training Squadrons, so that these active squadrons never get the chance of manœuvring in concert with torpedo craft. And yet all authorities are agreed that in the next war these little vessels may exercise a considerable influence on the fighting. It is true that in the manœuvres torpedo craft are attached to each of the contending sides, and some opportunity exists of determining the best method of working them in co-operation with other vessels. But if what occurs during the short fortnight devoted to the manœuvres is right, then the rigid separation of the destroyers from other ships during more than eleven months in the year must manifestly be wrong. Moreover, what is possible in the Mediterranean in our own navy, and in the French navy, both inside the Straits and out in the Atlantic, ought not to be impossible round our own coasts. It is true that the weather in the Mediterranean is finer than that in the Atlantic; but still even in our northern waters it is fine enough on most days for destroyers to keep the sea.

But if it was admitted that it is a desirable thing to increase the numbers and to very much enhance the importance of seagoing ships in home waters, and to exercise them more constantly at sea under conditions as closely as possible assimilated to those of actual war, where are the ships to come from, and how could they be manned? To begin with, there are the harbour ships. If all the harbour ships fit to fight be turned into *bonâ fide* seagoing ships, this would be a great advantage, and there are also a good number of ships available in the Fleet Reserve; but un-

doubtedly it is absolutely necessary that a certain number of ships should be always laid up and kept without crews whilst extensive repairs are being executed, and also that the men should have a certain period of rest and change ashore. Still, there is no need that such a large proportion of time should be spent ashore as at present, and there is no reason that ships needing extensive repairs should not be completed more promptly than is commonly the case. It will be most unsatisfactory to have to say when writing the history of our next war, as was said of many Spanish ships and some Americans during the late war, "This ship was under repair when war broke out, and was therefore of no service during the operations."

The country is very familiar with the continual plaint of those who interest themselves in our army organisation, that the short-service system, with the numerous changes which it entails, is ruining the regiments. There can be no *esprit de corps*, say they, amongst men who are drafted here to-day and there to-morrow, who scarcely learn the names of their officers before they are sent somewhere else, and have no pride in a battalion which they may leave in a month. All in the army admit that constant changes are a decided evil, and everything that is possible is done to keep officers and men together as much as is feasible without upsetting the necessary arrangements for feeding battalions abroad and filling up the gaps made by drafts to the reserve at home. In the navy we have long service, and therefore many of the difficulties that are found in the short-service army do not exist for us, and yet the changes are far more frequent. On foreign stations it does indeed happen that for three years most of a ship's company keep together; but considerably less than half of the total *personnel* of the navy is on foreign stations, and it is at home that changes are so frequent as to be absolutely bewildering. No sooner does a ship come home from abroad—take the Powerful for example—than her officers and men are dispersed to the four winds, never in most instances to see each other again as shipmates. If we follow the fortunes of a junior officer, we shall find that in order to avoid vegetation at home he is striving to get into a ship going abroad, and presently goes off, leaving some of the senior officers and most of the ship's company at home. These are distributed, at different periods and in varying numbers, in all directions, so that in one year from the paying off of the ship there will be found officers and men from the Powerful in at least fifty different ships and establishments, and in two or three years the number of separate units into which those who earned the medal in the Powerful have been dispersed may amount to a hundred. I have questioned many officers and men who have had long

periods of service afloat, and in reply to the inquiry, "What is the largest number of old shipmates that you have ever served with in another ship?" the answer is commonly, "Never more than twelve," or, "Well, there were fifteen of us in one ship;" "About ten, I think," and so on. Such an occurrence as having twenty old shipmates is most rare, and has never befallen either the present writer or any of his immediate acquaintances.

It is not meant to insinuate that the separation of old shipmates is intentional; but it is an undoubted fact that no attempt whatever is made to keep officers and men together, so that a newly commissioned ship's company always consists of a gathering of perfect strangers. As a remedy, it is suggested that in the first place, when a ship's company returns home after doing the ordinary three years or three years and a half on a foreign station, they should all be drafted to one and the same depot, the officers accompanying them. At once the objection will be raised, "What! will you send a smart set of officers to get fossilised at a depot? Why, the service will go to the dogs." But it is just from the absence of smart officers that the depots have such a demoralising effect, and with the importation of smart officers the depots would at once improve; the emulation amongst the ships' companies at the depot would also be most stimulating, and lots of useful work could undoubtedly be found for all hands. The assemblage of officers at the depot would soon become so considerable that a flag-officer would be required to take the command, and there would be full scope for the highest organising talents in making all the necessary arrangements for keeping ships' companies together as far as possible, and in having organised crews ready for every possible ship without interfering with the necessary detachment of individuals to go through special courses, &c. Thus out of the 800 Powerfuls some 200 or so might be drafted off to the gunnery school at their own port, others would be promoted, and some would be pensioned. Still a large majority might be kept together. Then, if it was decided to next send the Powerfuls to sea in a battleship belonging to one of the home squadrons, the numbers would have to be increased by drafts: preferably a small ship's company would be absorbed in this way. Wastage would also be made up, as is usual in a seagoing ship, by drafts from the training service, &c.; and when a ship's company was required for a new ship, or one that had been laid up for repairs, a thoroughly organised ship's company would thus be ready for her, and the ship would be as efficient in a week as she would be in two months on the present system. Officers and men would know and trust each other, there would be many glorious traditions binding them together, and the service would be benefited in every way. The present arrangement for keeping up the crews

of the home ships differs from that which obtains in the case of the ships abroad. In lieu of the whole ship's company joining at the same time, serving for three years, and then leaving together, small drafts are sent at short intervals, no single officer or man remaining more than three years in the ship, and being in many instances removed after a year's service, or, at any rate, after no more than two years. Officers and men who may join a ship together have nothing to do with each other, and thus the changes in these ships, though never as revolutionary as on the system on which foreign-service ships are manned and paid off, are quite sufficiently demoralising. Supposing it is decided to perpetuate this plan of relieving a ship's company in detachments, it would be better to have larger drafts of officers and men who had served together before: then a large ship would contain no more than three or four drafts, and each draft would form a definite unit. At present there is no cohesion whatever in the drafts, and the ship's company, owing to the constant changes, never gets fairly shaken down together. Thus, although a seagoing ship permanently in commission on the home station is never in the same unorganised condition as the newly commissioned ship bound for a foreign station or mobilised for the manœuvres or for war, the crew never attain that solidarity which distinguishes the complement of a ship which has had three years' knocking about together, if not at the other side of the world exactly, at any rate some distance from home.

My space is coming to an end, and I can well imagine my reader saying, "There is nothing here as to whether the navy has a sufficient number of ships or no. Is not the principal need of the navy more ships? Is it not this which the Navy League clamours for?" 'Tis true that most of those who write about the needs of the navy concern themselves more with ships than with the men and their organisation. On the other hand, those who set forth the wants of the army devote their attention not so much to weapons as to those who are to wield them. Neither method is sound in itself. Large numbers of good men are of small value if their weapons are inferior, and it is quite useless to put good weapons into the hands of unreliable men, or to expect great results from the best weapons when the men are few or incompetent. A ship is simply a warlike weapon wielded by her crew; it is possible that in the navy the *matériel* may be more important than the *personnel*, but this is not the question. Both are undeniably of great importance, and the navy is expected to be up to the highest standard in both respects.

I am certain, however, that a reorganisation of the home *personnel* will react in a healthy manner on the *matériel*. When all the harbour ships are dug out and sent to sea, and many ships, ancient and modern, now

in the reserve and ready for sea, are commissioned and made into seagoing ships under smart and influential officers, the anomaly of keeping old crocks like the Thunderer, Sultan, Edinburgh, and many others, and thus arming our highly trained and very expensive seamen with miserable "weapons," would be made more apparent. But they are fit to fight certain foreign ships, says the optimist. Yes; so is Brown Bess fit to fight a West Coast nigger if we double or treble our forces on the coast; but we did not arm the Coomassie relief force with that archaic weapon.

Many of our neighbours cannot afford to replace their old ships, whilst others, and the majority, could not possibly do it, because their shipbuilding resources are already taxed to the uttermost. But we have both the money and the shipyards, and we ought to replace nearly every ship which is fifteen years old. When this is done, I do not say that we should have need of nothing; but with the improvements in organisation which I have been advocating, we should be far better able to meet with our enemies in the gates which give access to the narrow seas, the sovereignty of which seas is now, as ever, the birthright of every Briton.

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DOOM CASTLE: A ROMANCE.[1]

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER I.—COUNT VICTOR COMES TO A STRANGE COUNTRY.

IT was an afternoon in autumn, with a sound of wintry breakers on the shore, the tall woods copper-colour, the thickets dishevelled, and the nuts, in the corries of Ardkinglas, the braes of Ardno, dropping upon bracken burned to gold. Until he was out of the glen and into the open land, the traveller could scarcely conceive that what by his chart was no more than an arm of the ocean could make so much ado; but when he found the incoming tide fretted here and there by black rocks, and elsewhere, in little bays, a beach strewn with boulders of great size, the high rumour of the sea-breakers in that breezy weather seemed more explicable. And still, for him, it was above all a country of appalling silence in spite of the tide thundering. Fresh from the pleasant rabble of Paris, the tumult of the streets, the unending gossip of the faubourgs that were at once his vexation and his joy, and from the eager ride that had brought him through Normandy when its orchards were busy from morning till night with cheerful peasants plucking fruit, his ear had not grown accustomed to the still of the valleys, the terrific hush of the mountains among which he had ridden for two days. The woods whose leaves fell constantly about him seemed

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in some swoon of nature, with no birds carolling on the boughs; the cloisters were monastic in their silence. A season of most dolorous influences, a land of sombre shadows and ravines, a day of sinister solitude; the sun slid through scudding clouds, high over a world blown upon by salt airs brisk and tonic; but man was wanting in those weary valleys, and the heart of Victor Jean, Comte de Montaiglon, was almost sick for very loneliness.

Thus it came as a relief to his ear, the removal of an oppression little longer to be endured, when he heard behind him what were apparently the voices of the odd-looking uncouth natives he had seen a quarter of an hour ago lurking, silent but alert and peering, phantoms of old story rather than humans, in the fir-wood near a defile made by a brawling cataract. They had wakened no suspicions in his mind. It was true they were savage-looking rogues in a ragged plaid-cloth of a dull device, and they had carried arms he had thought forbidden there by law. To a foreigner fresh from gentle lands there might well be a menace in their ambuscade, but he had known men of their race, if not of so savage an aspect, in the retinues of the Scots' exiles who hung about the side-doors of Saint Germains, passed mysterious days between that domicile of tragic comedy and Avignon or Rome, or ruffled it on empty pockets at the gaming-tables, so he had no apprehension. Besides, he was in the country of the Argyll, at least on the verge of it, a territory accounted law-abiding even to dulness by every Scot he had known since he was a child at Cammercy, and snuff-strewn conspirators, come to meet his uncles, took him on their knees when a lull in the cards or wine permitted, and recounted their adventures for his entertainment in a villainous French: he could not guess that the gentry in the wood behind him had taken a fancy to his horse, that they were broken men (as the phrase of the country put it), and that when he had passed them at the cataract—a haughty, well-set-up *duine uasail* all alone with a fortune of silk and silver lace on his apparel and the fob of a watch dangling at his groin most temptingly—they had promptly put a valuation upon himself and his possessions, and decided that the same were sent by Providence for their enrichment.

Ten of them ran after him clamouring loudly to give the impression of larger numbers; he heard them with relief when oppressed by the inhuman solemnity of the scenery that was too deep in its swound to give back even an echo to the breaker on the shore, and he drew up his horse, turned his head a little and listened, flushing with annoyance when the rude calls of his pursuers became, even in their unknown jargon, too plainly peremptory and meant for him.

"Dogs!" said he, "I wish I had a chance to open school here and teach manners," and without more deliberation he set his horse to an amble, designed

to betray neither complacency nor a poltroon's terrors.

"*Stad! stad!*" cried a voice closer than any of the rest behind him; he knew what was ordered by its accent, but no Montaiglon stopped to an insolent summons. He put the short rowels to the flanks of the sturdy lowland pony he bestrode, and conceded not so much as a look behind.

There was the explosion of a bell-mouthed musket, and something smote the horse spatteringly behind the rider's left boot. The beast swerved, gave a scream of pain, fell lumberingly on its side. With an effort, Count Victor saved himself from the falling body. For a moment he stood bewildered at the head of the suffering animal. The pursuing shouts had ceased. Behind him, short hazel-trees clustering thick with nuts, reddening bramble and rusty bracken tangled together in a coarse rank curtain of vegetation, quite still and motionless (but for the breeze among the upper leaves), and the sombre distance, dark with pine, had the mystery of a vault. It was difficult to believe his pursuers harboured there, perhaps reloading the weapon that had put so doleful a conclusion to his travels with the gallant little horse he had bought on the coast of Fife. That silence, that prevailing mystery, seemed to be the essence and the mood of this land, so different from his own, where laughter was ringing in the orchards and a myriad towns and clamant cities brimmed with life.

CHAPTER II.—THE PURSUIT.

Nobody who had acquaintance with Victor de Montaiglon would call him coward. He had fought with De Grammont, and brought a wound from Dettingen under circumstances to set him up for life in a repute for valour, and half a score of duels were at his credit or discredit in the chronicles of Paris society.

And yet, somehow, standing there in an unknown country beside a brute companion wantonly struck down by a robber's shot, and the wood so still around, and the sea thundering unfamiliar, he felt vastly uncomfortable, with a touch of more than physical apprehension. If the enemy would only manifest themselves to the eye and ear as well as to the unclassed senses that inform the instinct, it would be much more comfortable. Why did they not appear? Why did they not follow up their assault upon his horse? Why were they lurking in the silence of the thicket, so many of them, and he alone and so obviously at their mercy?

"What a rare delicacy!" said Count Victor to himself. "They would not interrupt my regretful tears. But for the true *élan* of the trade of robbery, give me old Cartouche picking pockets on the Pont Neuf."

While he loosened the bag with one hand, with the other he directed at the thicket the pistol that seemed of such

wholesome influence. Then he slung the bag upon his shoulder and encouraged the animal to get upon its legs, but vainly, for the shot was fatal.

"Ah!" said he regretfully, "I must sacrifice my bridge and my *bon* comrade."

Twice, three times, he placed the second pistol at the horse's head and as often withdrew it, reluctant, a man, as all who knew him wondered at, gentle to womanliness with a brute though in a cause against men the most bitter and sometimes cruel of opponents.

A rustle in the brake at last compelled him. "*Allons!*" said he impatiently with himself, "I do no more than I should have done with me in the like case," and he pulled the trigger.

Then having deliberately charged the weapon anew, he moved off in the direction he had been taking when the attack was made.

It was still, he knew, some distance to the castle. Half an hour before his rencontre with those broken gentry, now stealing in his rear with the cunning and the bloodthirstiness of their once native wolves (and always, remember, with the possibility of the blunderbuss for aught that he could tell), he had, for the twentieth time since he left the port of Dysart, taken out the rude itinerary, written in ludicrous Scoto-English by Hugh Bethune, one time scrivener to the Lord Marischal in exile, and read:—

". . . and so on to the Water of Leven (the brewster-wife at the howff near Loch Lomond mouth keeps a good glass of *aqua*), then by Luss (with an eye on the Gregarach), there after a bittock to Glencroe and down upon the House of Ardkinglas, a Hanoverian rat whom 'ware. Round the loch head and three miles further the Castle o' the Baron. Give him my devoirs and hopes to challenge him to a Bowl when Yon comes off which God kens there seems no hurry."

By that showing the castle of Baron Lamond must be within half an hour's walk of where he now moved without show of eagerness, yet quickly none the less, from a danger the more alarming because the extent of it could not be computed.

In a little the rough path he followed bent parallel with the sea. A tide at the making licked ardently upon sand-spits strewn with ware, and at the forelands, overhung by harsh and stunted seaside shrubs, the breakers rose tumultuous. On the sea there was utter vacancy; only a few screaming birds slanted above the wave, and the coast, curving far before him, gave his eye no sign at first of the castle to which he had got the route from M. Hugh Bethune.

Then his vision, that had been set for something more imposing, for the towers and embrasures of a stately domicile, if not for a Chantilly, at least for the equal of the paternal chateau in the Meuse valley, with multitudinous chimneys and the incense of kind luxuriant hearths, suave parks, gardens, and gravelled walks, contracted with dubiety and amazement upon a dismal tower perched upon a promontory.

Revealed against the brown

hills and the sombre woods of the farther coast, it was scarcely a wonder that his eye had failed at first to find it. Here were no pomps of lord or baron; little luxuriance could prevail behind those eyeless gables; there could be no suave pleasance about those walls hanging over the noisy and inhospitable wave. No pomp, no pleasant amenities; the place seemed to jut into the sea, defying man's oldest and most inveterate enemy, its gable ends and one crenelated bastion or turret betraying its sinister relation to its age, its whole aspect arrogant and unfriendly, essential of war. Caught suddenly by the vision that swept the fretted curve of the coast, it seemed blackly to perpetuate the spirit of the land, its silence, its solitude and terrors.

These reflections darted through the mind of Count Victor as he sped, monstrously uncomfortable with the burden of the bag that bobbed on his back, not to speak of the indignity of the office. It was not the kind of castle he had looked for, but a castle, in the narrow and squalid meaning of a penniless refugee like Bethune, it doubtless was, the only one apparent on the landscape, and therefore too obviously the one he sought.

"Very well, God is good," said Count Victor, who, to tell all and leave no shred of misunderstanding, was in some regards the frankest of pagans, and he must be jogging on for its security.

But as he jogged, the ten broken men who had been fascinated by his too ostentatious fob and the extravagance of his embroidery, and inspired furthermore by a natural detestation of any foreign *duine uasail* apparently bound for the seat of MacCailen Mor, gathered boldness, and soon he heard the thicket break again behind him.

He paused, turned sharply with the pistols in his hands. Instantly the brake received its inhabitants; a bracken or two nodded, a hazel sapling swung back and forward more freely than the wind accounted for. And at the same time there rose on the afternoon the wail of a wildfowl high up on the hill, answered in a sharp and querulous too-responsive note of the same character in the wood before.

The gentleman who had twice fought *à la barrière* felt a nameless new thrill, a shudder of the being, born of antique terrors generations before his arms were quartered with those of Rochefoucauld and Modene.

It was becoming all too awkward, this affair. He broke into a more rapid walk, then into a run, with his eyes intent on the rude dark keep that held the promontory, now the one object in all the landscape that had to his senses some aspect of human fellowship and sympathy.

The caterans were assured; *Dieu du ciel*, how they ran too! Those in advance broke into an appalling halloo, the shout of hunters on the heels of quarry. High above the voice of the breakers it

sounded savage and alarming in the ears of Count Victor, and he fairly took to flight, the valise bobbing more ludicrously than ever on his back.

It was like the man that, in spite of dreads not to be concealed from himself, he should be seized as he sped with a notion of the grotesque figure he must present, carrying that improper burden. He must even laugh when he thought of his austere punctilious maternal aunt, the Baronne de Chenier, and fancied her horror and disgust could she behold her nephew disgracing the De Chenier blood by carrying his own baggage and outraging several centuries of devilishly fine history by running—positively running—from ill-armed footpads who had never worn breeches. She would frown, her bosom would swell till her bodice would appear to crackle at the arm-pits, the seven hairs on her upper lip would bristle all the worse against her purpling face as she cried it was the little Lyons shopkeeper in his mother's grandfather that was in his craven legs. Doubt it who will, a sense of imminent danger will not wholly obliterate the sense of humour, and Montaiglon, as he ran before the footpads, laughed softly at the Baronne.

But a short knife with a black hilt hissed past his right ear and buried three-fourths of its length in the grass, and so abruptly dispelled his sense of humour. This was ridiculous. He stopped suddenly, turned him round about in a passion, and fired one of the pistols at an unfortunate robber too late to duck among the bracken. And the marvel was that the bullet found its home, for the aim was uncertain, and the shot meant more for an emphatic protest than for attack.

The gled's cry rose once more, rose higher on the hill, echoed far off, and was twice repeated nearer hand with a dropping melancholy cadence. Gaunt forms grew up straight among the undergrowth of trees, indifferent to the other pistol, and ran back or over to where the wounded comrade lay.

"Heaven's thunder!" cried Count Victor, "I wish I had aimed more carefully." He was appalled at the apparent tragedy of his act. A suicidal regret and curiosity kept him standing where he fired, with the pistol still smoking in his hands, till there came from the men clustered round the body in the brake a loud simultaneous wail unfamiliar to his ear, but unmistakable in its import. He turned and ran wildly for the tower that had no aspect of sanctuary in it; his heart drummed noisily at his breast; his mouth parched and gaped. In upon his lips in a little dropped water; he tasted the salt of his sweating body. And then he knew weariness, great weariness, that plucked at the sinews behind his knees, and felt sore along the hips and back, the result of his days of hard riding come suddenly to the surface. Truly he was not happy.

But if he ran wearily he ran well, better at least than his pursuers, who had their own reasons for taking it more leisurely, and in a while there was neither sight nor sound of the enemy.

He was beginning to get some satisfaction from this, when, turning a bend of the path within two hundred yards of the castle, behold an unmistakable enemy barred his way! An ugly, hoggish, obese man, with bare legs most grotesquely like pillars of granite and a protuberant paunch; but the devil must have been in his legs to carry him more swiftly than thoroughbred limbs had carried Count Victor. He stood sneering in the path, turning up the right sleeve of a soiled and ragged saffron shirt with his left hand, the right being engaged most ominously with a sword of a fashion that might well convince the Frenchman he had some new methods of fence to encounter in a few minutes.

High and low looked Count Victor as he slacked his pace, seeking for some way out of this sack, releasing as he did so the small sword from the tanglement of his skirts, feeling the Mechlin deucedly in his way. As he approached closer to the man barring his path he relapsed into a walk and opened a parley in English that except for its slight accent had nothing in it of France, where he had long been the comrade of compatriots to this preposterous savage with the manners of medieval Provence when footpads lived upon Damoiselle Picoree.

"My good fellow," said he, as one might open with a lackey, "I protest I am in a hurry, for my presence makes itself much desired elsewhere. I cannot comprehend why in Heaven's name so large a regiment of you should turn out to one unfortunate traveller."

The fat man fondled the brawn of his sword-arm and seemed to gloat upon the situation.

"Come, come!" said Count Victor, affecting a cheerfulness, "my waistcoat would scarcely adorn a man of your inches, and as for my pantaloons"—he looked at the ragged kilt—"as for my pantaloons, now on one's honour, would you care for them? They are so essentially a matter of custom."

He would have bantered it on in this strain up to the very nose of the enemy, but the man in his path was utterly unresponsive to his humour. In truth he did not understand a word of the nobleman's pleasantry. He uttered something like a war-cry, threw his bonnet off a head as bald as an egg, and smote out vigorously with his broadsword.

Count Victor fired the pistol *à bout portant* with deliberation; the flint, in the familiar irony of fate, missed fire, and there was nothing more to do with the treacherous weapon but to throw it in the face of the Highlander. It struck full; the trigger-guard gashed the jaw and the metalled butt spoiled the sight of an eye.

"This accounts for the mace

[illegible] were succeeded by a growth of scrub wood. Towards the south-south-west Edgar rushed, still keeping the sounds in the west behind, and as he seemed to gain if his burden, to be gaining ground upon his pursuers. It was then at the greatest of speed. In his gladness he threw a taunting cry behind, a hunter's proverbial challenge.

And then he came upon the edge of the sea. The sea! Ever! That he should never have thought of that! There was the same salty, beating sound, the breakers, very wild, very strong upon its barren promontory. He was no twenty paces from its walls, and yet it might as well have been a league away, for he was cut off from it by a natural moat of sea-water that swept about it in many little waves. It rode like a ship, fully independent of every self-sustained, impregnable, eternally apart, for ever indifferent to the mainland, where a Monarch was mighty quarrelling with his people.

For a moment or two he stood bewildered. There was a passage to this eccentric [illegible] there was, on this side [illegible] at once, but so little as a boat [illegible] with the adjacent [illegible] he must swim. Very well: the [illegible], guilty [illegible] against his [illegible] must swim and [illegible] on. And it [illegible] as if [illegible] the only [illegible] would be called

and whistled; no answer came from the castle, that he might have thought a deserted ruin if a column of smoke did not rise from some of its chimneys.

It was his good fortune that for some reason the pursuit was no longer apparent. The dim woods behind seemed to have swallowed up sight and sound of the broken men, who, at fault, were following up their quarry to the castle of Mac-Cailen Mor instead of to that of Baron Lamond. He had therefore time to prepare himself for his next step. He sat on the shore and took off his elegant long boots, the quite charming silk stockings so unlike travel in the wilds; then looked dubiously at his limbs and at the castle. No, manifestly, an approach so frank was not to be thought of, and he compromised by unbuttoning the foot of his pantaloons and turning them over his knees. In any case, if one had to swim over that yeasty and alarming barrier, his clothing must get wet. He would wade as far as he could, and if he must, swim the rest.

With the boots and the valise and the *bas de soie* and the skirts of his coats tucked high in his arms, the Count waded into the tide, that chilled deliciously after the heat of his flight.

But it was ridiculous! It was the most condemnable folly! His face burned with shame as he found himself half-way over the channel and the waves no higher than his ankles. It was to walk through a few inches of water that he had nearly stripped to nature!

And a woman was laughing at him, *morbleu!* Decidedly a woman was laughing—a young woman, he could wager, with a monstrously musical laugh, by St Denys, and witnessing (though he could not see her even had he wished) this farce from an upper window of the tower. He stood for a moment irresolute, half inclined to retreat from the ridicule that never failed to affect him more unpleasantly than danger the most dire; his face and neck flamed; he forgot all about the full-bosomed Baronne or remembered her only to agree that nobility demanded some dignity even in fleeing from an enemy. But the shouts of the pursuers that had died away in the distance grew again in the neighbourhood, and he pocketed his diffidence and resumed his boots, then sought the entrance to a dwelling that had no hospitable portal to the shore.

Close at hand the edifice gained in austerity and dignity while it lost the last of its scanty air of hospitality. Its walls were of a rough rubble of granite and whinstone, grown upon at the upper storeys with grasses and weeds wafted upon the ledges by the winds that blow indifferent, bringing the green messages of peace from God. A fortalice, dark, square-built, flanked to the southern corner by a round turret, lit by few windows, and these but tiny and suspicious, it was as Scots and arrogant as the thistle that had pricked Count

Victor's feet when first he set foot upon the islet.

A low wall surrounded a patch of garden-ground to the rear, one corner of it grotesquely adorned with a bower all bedraggled with rains, yet with the red berry of the dog-rose gleaming in the rusty leafage like grapes of fire. He passed through the little garden and up to the door. Its arch, ponderous, deep-moulded, hung a scowling eyebrow over the black and studded oak, and over all was an escutcheon with a blazon of hands fesswise and castles embattled, and the legend—

"DOOM.

Man, Behauld the End of All. Be Nocht
Wiser than the Hiest. Hope in God!"

He stood on tiptoe to read the more easily the time-blurred characters, his baggage at his feet, his fingers pressed against the door. Some of the words he could not decipher nor comprehend, but the first was plain to his understanding.

"Doom!" said he airily and half aloud. "Doom! *Quelle félicité!* It is an omen."

Then he rapped lightly on the oak with the pommel of his sword.

CHAPTER III.—BARON OF DOOM.

Deep in some echoing corridor of the stronghold a man's voice rose in the Gaelic language, ringing in a cry for service, but no one came.

Count Victor stepped back and looked again upon the storm-battered front, the neglected garden, the pathetic bower. He saw smoke but at a single chimney, and broken glass in the little windows, and other evidences that suggested meagre soup was common fare in Doom.

"M. Bethune's bowl," he said to himself, "is not likely to be brimming over if he is to drink it here. M. le Baron shouting there is too much of the gentleman to know the way to the back of his own door; Glengarry again for a louis!—Glengarry *sans feu ni lieu*, but always the most punctilious when most nearly penniless."

Impatiently he switched with the sword at the weeds about his feet; then reddened at the instinct of apprehension that had made him all unconsciously bare the weapon at a door whose hospitality he was seeking, rapped again, and sheathed the steel.

The door opened, showing on the threshold, with a stool in his hand, a very little bow-legged man of fifty years or thereby, having a face all lined like a chart with wrinkles, ruddy at the cheeks as a winter apple, and attired in a mulberry-brown. He put his heels together with a mechanical precision and gravely gave a military salute.

"Doom?" inquired Count Victor formally, with a foot inside the door.

"Jist that," answered the servitor a little dryly, and yet

with a smile puckering his face as he put an opposing toe of a coarse unbuckled brogue under the instep of the stranger. The accent of the reply smacked of Fife; when he heard it, Count Victor at a leap was back in the port of Dysart, where it shrank beneath tall rocks, and he was hearing again for the first time with an amused wonder the native mariners crying to each other on the quays.

"Is your master at home?" he asked.

"At hame, quo' he! It wad depend a'thegether on wha wants to ken," said the servant cautiously. Then in a manner ludicrously composed of natural geniality and burlesque importance, "It's the auld styles aboot Doom, sir, though there's few o' us left to keep them up, and whether the Baron's oot or in is a thing that has to be studied maist scrupulously before the like o' me could say."

"My name is De Montaiglon; I am newly from France; I——"

"Step your ways in, Monsher de Montaiglon," cried the little man with a salute more profound than before. "We're prood to see you, and hoo are they a' in France?"

"Tolerably well, I thank you," said Count Victor, amused at this grotesque combination of military form and familiarity.

Mungo Boyd set down the stool on which he had apparently been standing to look through the spy-hole in the door, and seized the stranger's bag. With three rapid movements of the feet, executed in the mechanical time of a soldier, he turned to the right-about, paused a second, squared his shoulders, and led the way into a most barren and chilly interior.

"This way, your honour," said he. "Ye'll paurdon my discretion, for it's a pernikity hoose this for a' the auld, bauld, gallant forms and ceremonies. I jalouse ye cam roond in a wherry frae the toon, and it's droll I never saw ye land. There was never mony got into Doom withoot the kennin' o' the garrison. It happened aince in Black Hugh's time wi' a corps o' Campbells frae Ardkinglas, and they found themselves in a wasp's bike."

The Count stumbled in the dusk of the interior, for the door had shut of itself behind them, and the corridor was unlit except by what it borrowed from an open door at the far end, leading into a room. An odour of burning peats filled the place; the sound of the sea-breakers was to be heard in a murmur as one hears far-off magic seas in a shell that is held to the ear. And Count Victor, finding all his pleasant anticipations of the character of this baronial dwelling utterly erroneous, mentally condemned Bethune to perdition as he stumbled behind the little grotesque aping the soldier's pompous manner.

The door that lent what illumination there was to his entrance was held half open by a man who cast at the visitor a glance wherein were surprise and curiosity.

"The Monsher de Montaiglon frae France," announced Mungo, stepping aside still with

"I s persuade us—my wearied [illegible] to [illegible] with [illegible] than be sent to it. I [illegible] the [illegible] of the Highland spirit. I e Baron wears [illegible] and [illegible] his [illegible] in Latin [illegible]."

"[illegible] man," said the Baron, [illegible] of the point, "and [illegible] wears the tartan."

"[illegible] is the watchword," re[illegible] Count Victor, [illegible] [illegible] at his own [illegible].

"I [illegible] that," said the Baron, with the [illegible] in his [illegible] and then he added hur[illegible]: "Not that the tartan's [illegible]. It was the [illegible] of this country a [illegible] [illegible] the way of an[illegible]. There's nothing [illegible] but will [illegible] it more readily than the [illegible]. I—the [illegible] [illegible]——"

"I [illegible] it be the [illegible]," murmured the Count, smiling, and [illegible] fingers went to the pointing of his moustache.

"Nothing like the [illegible] the [illegible] was [illegible] telling your [illegible] in every line. [illegible] that you would not go [illegible] the moor to [illegible] there but [illegible] in the roadside [illegible] [illegible] a small man of a family of [illegible]. Some people will be [illegible] that the [illegible] should be [illegible], but what does it matter?"

"The tartan is [illegible]," [illegible] Count Victor, somewhat puzzled.

Doom flushed: a curious gleam came into his eyes: he turned to fumble noisily with the glasses as he replaced them in the cupboard.

"I thought that was widely enough known," said he. "Put down by the law, and perhaps a good [illegible] too, Count." He came back to the table with the muttered [illegible], sat and stared into the grey film of the peat-fire. "There was a story in every line," said he, "a history in every sheet, and we are all creatures in the glass, Count, that we could never see the page without minding what they said. Now the tartan's in the eye-dot, and you'll see about here our [illegible]-colour—the old stuff stained with [illegible] from the rock."

"Ah, what [illegible]!" said Count Victor with sympathetic tone. "But there are some who wear it yet."

The Baron started slightly. "Sir," he [illegible], without taking his eyes from the embers, "the precipitancy of my demands upon your gate and your hospitality must have something of an air of impertinence," said Count Victor [illegible], unbuckling his sword and laying it before him on the table: "but the cause of it lay with several zealous gentlemen, who were apparently not affected by any law against tartan, for tartan they wore, and [illegible] too, though the [illegible] of them made it difficult to be certain of either fact. In the East it is customary, I believe, for the infidel to take off his boots when he intrudes on sacred ground: nothing is said about stockings, but I had to divest myself of both boots and stockings. I washed into Doom a few minutes ago, for all the world like an oyster-man with my bag on my back."

"Good God!" cried the Baron. "I forgot the tide. Could you not have whistled?"

"Whole operas, my dear M. le Baron, but the audience behind me would have made the performance so necessarily allegretto as to be ineffective. It was wade at once or pipe and perish. *Mon Dieu!* but I believe you are right; as an honest man I cannot approve of my first introduction to your tartan."

"It must have been one of the watches; it must have been some of the king's soldiers," suggested the Baron.

Count Victor shrugged his shoulders. "I think I know a red-coat when I see one," said he. "These were quite unlicensed hawks, with the hawk's call for signal too."

"Are you sure?" cried the Baron, standing up, and still with an unbelieving tone.

"My dear M. le Baron, I killed one of the birds to look at the feathers. That is the confounded thing too! So unceremonious a manner of introducing myself to a country where I desire me above all to be circumspect; is it not so?"

As he spoke he revealed the agitation that his flippant words had tried to cloak—by a scarcely perceptible tremor of the hand that drummed the table, a harder note in his voice, and the biting of his moustache. He saw that Doom guessed his perturbation, and he compelled himself to a careless laugh, lounged to his feet, twisted his moustache points, drew forth his rapier with a flourish, and somewhat theatrically saluted and lunged in space as if the gesture gave his tension ease.

The Baron for a moment forgot the importance of what he had been told as he watched the graceful beauty of the movement, that revealed not only some eccentricity but personal vanity of a harmless kind and wholesome tastes and talents.

"Still I'm a little in the dark," he said when the point dropped and Count Victor recovered.

"Pardon," said his guest. "I am vexed at what you may perhaps look on as a trifle. The ruffians attacked me a mile or two farther up the coast, shot my horse below me, and chased me to the very edge of your moat. I made a feint to shoot one with my pistol, and came closer on the gold than I had intended."

"The Macfarlanes!" cried Doom, with every sign of uneasiness. "It's a pity, it's a pity; not that a man more or less of that crew makes any difference, but the affair might call for more attention to this place and your presence here than might be altogether wholesome for you or me."

He heard the story in more detail, and when Count Victor had finished, ran into an adjoining room to survey the coast from a window there. He came back with a less troubled vision.

"At least they're gone now," said he in a voice that still had a troubled note in it. "I wish I knew who it was you struck. Would it be Black Andy of Arroquhar now? If

it's Andy, the gang will be crying 'Loch Sloy!' about the house in a couple of nights; if it was a common man of the tribe, there might be no more about it, for we're too close on the Duke's gallows to be meddled with noisily; that's the first advantage I ever found in my neighbourhood."

"He was a man of a long habit of body," said Count Victor, "and he fell with a grunt."

"Then it was not Andy. Andy is like a hogshead—a blob of creesh with a turnip on the top—and he would fall with a curse."

"Name of a pipe! I know him; he debated the last few yards of the way with me, and I gave him De Chenier's mace in the jaw."

"Sir?"

"I put him slightly out of countenance with the butt and trigger-guard of my pistol. Again I must apologise, dear Baron, for so unceremonious and ill-tempered an approach to your hospitality. You will confess it is a sort of country the foibles of whose people one has to grow accustomed to, and Bethune gave me no guidance for such an emergency as banditti on the fringe of Argyll's notoriously humdrum Court."

"Odd!" repeated Doom. "Will you step this way?" He led Count Victor to the window that commanded the coast, and their heads together filled the narrow space as they looked out. It was a wondrous afternoon. The sun swung low in a majestic sky, whose clouds of gold and purple seemed to the gaze of Montaiglon a continuation of the actual hills of wood and heather whereof they were the culmination. He saw, it seemed to him, the myriad peaks, the vast cavernous mountain clefts of a magic land, the abode of seraphim and the sun's eternal smile.

"God is good!" said he again, no way reverently, but with some emotion. "I thought I had left for ever the place of hope, and here's paradise with open doors." Then he looked upon the nearer country, upon the wooded hills, the strenuous shoulders of the bens upholding all that glory of sinking sunshine, and on one he saw upstanding, a vulgar blotch upon the landscape, a gaunt long spar with an overhanging arm.

"Ah!" he said airily, "there is civilisation in the land after all."

"Plenty of law at least," said the Baron. "Law of its kind—MacCailein law. His Grace, till the other day, as it might be, was Justice-General of the shire, Sheriff of the same, Regality Lord, with rights of pit and gallows. My place goes up to the knowe beside his gallows; but his Grace's regality comes beyond this, and what does he do but put up his dule-tree there that I may see it from my window and mind the fact. It's a fine country this; man, I love it! I'm bound to be loving it, as the saying goes, waking and sleeping, and it brought me back from France, that I had

no illwill to, and kept me indoors in the 'Forty-five,' though my heart was in the rising, as Bethune would tell you. A grand country out and in, wet and dry, winter and summer, and only that tree there and what it meant to mar the look and comfort of it. But here I'm at my sentiments and you starving, I am sure, for something to eat."

He moved from the window out at which he had been gazing with a fondness that surprised and amused his visitor, and called loudly for Mungo.

In a moment the little retainer was at the door jauntily saluting in his military manner.

"Hae ye been foraging the day, Mungo?" asked the master indulgently.

"Na, na, there was nae need wi' a commissariat weel provided for voluntary. Auld Dugald brought in his twa kain hens yesterday, and the cauld corp o' ane o' them's in the pantry. There's the end o' a hench o' venison frae Strathlachlan, and twa oors syne, when the tide was oot, there was beef padovies and stoved howtowdies, but I gied them to twa gaun-aboot bodies."

They both looked inquiringly at Count Victor.

"I regret the what-do-you-call-it?—the stoved howtowdy," said he, laughing, "more for the sound of it than for any sense its name conveys to me."

"There's meat as weel as music in it, as the fox said when he ate the bagpipes," said Mungo. "There's waur nor howtowdy. And oh! I forgot the het victual, there's jugged hare."

"Is the hare ready?" asked the Baron suspiciously.

"It's no jist a'thegether what ye micht ca' ready," answered Mungo without hesitation; "but it can be here het in nae time, and micht agree wi' the Count better than the cauld fowl."

"Tell Annapla to do the best she can," broke in the Baron on his servant's cheerful garrulity; and Mungo with another salute disappeared.

"How do your women-folk like the seclusion of Doom?" asked Count Victor, to make conversation while the refection was in preparation. "With the sea about you so, and the gang of my marauding obese friend in the wood behind, I should think you had little difficulty in keeping them under your eye."

The Baron was obviously confused. "Mungo's quite enough to keep his eye on Annapla," said he. "He has the heart and fancy to command a garrison; there's a drum for ever beating in his head, a whistle aye fifing in his lug, and he will amuse you with his conceits of soldiering ancient and modern, a trade he thinks the more of because Heaven made him so unfit to become prentice to it. Good Mungo! there have been worse men; indeed what need I grudge admitting there have been few better? He has seen this place more bien than it is to-day in my father's time, and in my own too before the lawpleas ate us up; you will excuse

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his Scots freedom of speech, Count, he——"

A shot rang outside in some shrubbery upon the mainland, suddenly putting an end to Doom's conversation. Count Victor, sure that the Macfarlanes were there again, ran to the window and looked out, while his host in the rear bit his lip with every sign of annoyance. As Montaiglon looked he saw Mungo emerge from the shrubbery with a rabbit in his hand and push off hurriedly in a little boat, which apparently was in use for communication with the shore under such circumstances.

"And now," said the Count, without comment upon what he had seen, "I think, with your kind permission, I shall change my boots before eating."

"There's plenty of time for that, I jalouse," said Doom, smiling somewhat guiltily, and he showed his guest to a room in the turret.

It was up a flight of corkscrew stairs, and lit with singular poverty by an orifice more of the nature of a port-hole for a piece than a window, and this port or window, well out in the angle of the turret, commanded a view of the southward wall or curtain of the castle.

Montaiglon, left to himself, opened the bag that Mungo had placed in readiness for him in what was evidently the guest-room of the castle, transformed the travelling half of himself into something that was more in conformity with the gay nature of his upper costume, complacently surveyed the result when finished, and hummed a *chanson* of Pierre Gringoire's, altogether unremembering the encounter in the wood, the dead robber, and the stern nature of his embassy here so far from France.

He bent to close the valise, and with a start abruptly concluded his song at the sight of a miniature with the portrait of a woman looking at him from the bottom of the bag.

"*Mort de ma vie!* what a fool I am, what a forgetful *vengeur*, to be chanting Gringoire in the house of Doom and my quarry still to hunt!" His voice had of a sudden gained a stern, a cruel, accent; the pleasantness of his aspect—that came almost wholly from his eyes—became clouded by a frown. Looking round the constricted room, and realising how like a prison-cell it was compared with what he had expected, he felt oppressed as with the want of air. He looked vainly about the window for latch or hinge to open it, and as he did so glanced along the castle wall painted yellow by the declining sun. He noticed idly that some one was putting out upon the sill of a window on a lower stage what might have been a green kerchief had not the richness of its fabric and design suggested more a pennon or banneret. It was carefully placed by a woman's hands—the woman herself unseen. The incident recalled an old exploit of his own in Marney, and a flood of humorous memories of amorous intrigue.

"Mademoiselle Annapla," said he whimsically, "has a lover, and

here's his signal. The Baron's daughter? the Baron's niece? the Baron's ward? or merely the Baron's domestic? M. Bethune's document suffers infernally from the fault of being too curt. He might at least have indicated the fair recluse."

CHAPTER IV.—WANTED, A SPY.

The wail of a mountain pipe, poorly played, as any one accustomed to its strains would have admitted, even if the instrument was one he loved, and altogether execrable in the ears of Montaiglon, called him back to the *salle*, where Doom joined him in a meal whereof good Mungo's jugged hare formed no part. Mungo, who had upheld ancient ceremony by his crude performance on the *piob mhor*, was the attendant upon the table,—an office he undertook with his bonnet on his head, "in token," as his master whisperingly explained to Count Victor, "of his sometimes ill-informed purpose of conducting every formal task in Doom upon the strict letter of military codes as pertained in camps, garrisons, and strongholds." It was amusing to witness the poor fellow's pompous precision of movement as he stood behind his master's chair or helped the guest to his humble meal; the rigidity of his inactive moments, or the ridiculous jerkiness with which he passed a platter as 'twere to the time of a drill-sergeant's baton. More amusing still to one able, like Count Victor, to enter into the humour of the experience, was it to have his garrulity get the better of him in spite of the military punctilio.

"The Baron was telling me aboot your exploit wi' the Loch Sloy pairty. Man! did I no' think ye had come by boat," he whispered over a tendered ale-glass. "It was jist my luck to miss sic a grand ploy. I wad hae backed ye to haud the water against Black Andy and all his clan, and they're no' slack at a tulzie."

"Ye may be grand in a fight, Mungo, but only a middling man at forage," interrupted his master. "I think ye said jugged hare?"

"It wasna my faut," explained the domestic, "that ye havena what was steepulated; the Baron wadna bide till the beast was cooked."

Doom laughed. "Come, come, Mungo," said he, "the Count could scarcely be expected to wait for the cooking of an animal running wild in the bracken twenty minutes ago."

"Oh, it disna tak' sae terrible lang to cook a hare," said the unabashed retainer.

"But was it a hare after a', Mungo?" asked his master. "Are ye sure it wasna a rabbit?"

"A rabbit!" cried he in astonishment; then more cautiously, "Weel, if it was a rabbit, it was a gey big ane, that's a' I can say," and he covered his perturbation by a retreat from the room to resume

his office of musician, which, it appeared, demanded a tune after dinner as well as before it.

What had seemed to Montaiglon a harsh, discordant torturing of reeds when heard on the stair outside his chamber, seemed somehow more mellowed and appropriate — pleasing even—when it came from the garden outside the castle, on whose grass-grown walk the little lowlander strutted as he played the evening melody of the house of Doom—a pibroch all imbued with passion and with melancholy. The distance lulled it into something almost less than human music, into a harmony with the monotone of the wave that thundered against the rock; it seemed the voice of choiring mermen; it had the bitterness, the agonised remembrance, of the sea's profound; it was full of hints of stormy nights and old wars. For a little Doom and his visitor sat silent listening to it, the former, with a strain upon his countenance, tapping nervously with his fingers upon the arm of his chair.

"An old custom in the Highlands," he explained. "I set, perhaps, too little store by it myself, but Mungo likes to maintain it, though he plays the pipe but indifferently, and at this distance you might think the performance not altogether without merit."

"I love all music," replied Count Victor with polite ambiguity, and he marvelled at the signs of some deep feeling in his host.

Till a late hour they sat together while Count Victor explained his mission to the Highlands. He told much, but, to be sure, he did not at first tell all. He recounted the evidences of the spy's guilt as a correspondent with the British Government, whose pay he drew while sharing the poor fortunes and the secrets of the exiled Jacobites. "Iscariot, my dear Baron," he protested, "was a Bayard compared with this wretch. His presence in your locality should pollute the air; have you not felt a malaise?"

"It's dooms hard," admitted the Baron, throwing up distressed hands, "but, man, I'm feared he's not the only one. Do you know, I could mention well-kent names far ben in the Cause—men not of hereabouts at all, but of Lochaber no less, though you may perhaps not guess all that means — and they're in Paris up to the elbow now in the same trade. It's well known to some of yourselves, or should be, and it puzzles me that you should come to the shire of Argyll on account of one, as I take it, no worse than three or four you might have found by stepping across the road to Roisin's coffee-house in the Rue Vaugirard. The commoners in the late troubles have been leal enough, I'll give them that credit, but some of the gentry wag their tongues for Prince Tearlach and ply their pens for Geordie's pay."

The servant came in with two candles, placed them on the table, and renewed the fire. He had on a great woollen

night-cowl of gaudy hue with a superb tassel that bobbed grotesquely over his beady eyes.

"I'll awa' to my bed, if it's your will, Baron," said he with the customary salute. "I was thinkin' it might be needful for me to bide up a while later in case ony o' the Coont's freends came the way; but the tide'll keep them aff till mornin' anyway, and I'm sure we'll meet them a' the baulder then if we hae a guid sleep." He got permission to retire, and passed into the inky darkness of the corridor, and crept to that part of the vacant dwelling in which he had his bed.

"There might be another reason for my coming here," said Montaiglon, resuming the conversation where Mungo's entrance had broken it off. "In this affair there was a lady. I knew her once." He paused with a manner showing discomposure.

"And there was liking; I can comprehend," said Doom with sympathy.

"Liking is but love without wings," said Montaiglon. "My regard soared above the clay; I loved her, and I think she was not indifferent to me till this man came in her way. He had, they say, the devil's tongue; at least he had the devil's heart, and she died six months ago with her head on my arm. I could tell you the story, M. le Baron, but it is in all the books, and you can fancy it easily. She died forgiving her betrayer, and sending a message to that effect by me. I come to deliver it, and, by God! to push it to his heart."

"It is a dangerous errand in this country and at this time," said Doom, looking into the fire.

"Ah! but you did not know Cecile," replied Montaiglon, simply.

"But I know the human heart. I know it in any man under the sober age of thirty. Better to let it rest this. Excuse my interference. It does not matter much to me that it should be out of my house you should go seeking for your vengeance, but I'm an older man than you, and have learned how quickly the worst misfortunes and wrongs may be forgotten. In your place I would leave this man to the punishment of his own conscience."

Montaiglon laughed bitterly. "That," said he, "is to assume a mechanism that in his case never existed. Pardon me, I pray you, but I prefer the old reckoning, which will be all the fairer because he has the reputation of being a good swordsman, and I am not without some practice."

"And the man's name? you have not mentioned it."

"But there you puzzle me. He was eight months in France and some time in the Dutch lowlands, six of these in a lodging beside the Baigneurs on the Estrapade, Rue Dauphine. He came with no credentials but from Glengarry, and now Glengarry can give no account of him except that he had spoken familiarly to him of common friends in the Highlands."

sounded savage and alarming in the ears of Count Victor, and he fairly took to flight, the valise bobbing more ludicrously than ever on his back.

It was like the man that, in spite of dreads not to be concealed from himself, he should be seized as he sped with a notion of the grotesque figure he must present, carrying that improper burden. He must even laugh when he thought of his austere punctilious maternal aunt, the Baronne de Chenier, and fancied her horror and disgust could she behold her nephew disgracing the De Chenier blood by carrying his own baggage and outraging several centuries of devilishly fine history by running—positively running—from ill-armed footpads who had never worn breeches. She would frown, her bosom would swell till her bodice would appear to crackle at the arm-pits, the seven hairs on her upper lip would bristle all the worse against her purpling face as she cried it was the little Lyons shopkeeper in his mother's grandfather that was in his craven legs. Doubt it who will, a sense of imminent danger will not wholly obliterate the sense of humour, and Montaiglon, as he ran before the footpads, laughed softly at the Baronne.

But a short knife with a black hilt hissed past his right ear and buried three-fourths of its length in the grass, and so abruptly dispelled his sense of humour. This was ridiculous. He stopped suddenly, turned him round about in a

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with a smile puckering his face as he put an opposing toe of a coarse unbuckled brogue under the instep of the stranger. The accent of the reply smacked of Fife; when he heard it, Count Victor at a leap was back in the port of Dysart, where it shrank beneath tall rocks, and he was hearing again for the first time with an amused wonder the native mariners crying to each other on the quays.

"Is your master at home?" he asked.

"At hame, quo' he! It wad depend a'thegether on wha wants to ken," said the servant cautiously. Then in a manner ludicrously composed of natural geniality and burlesque importance, "It's the auld styles aboot Doom, sir, though there's few o' us left to keep them up, and whether the Baron's oot or in is a thing that has to be studied maist scrupulously before the like o' me could say."

"My name is De Montaiglon; I am newly from France; I——"

"Step your ways in, Monsher de Montaiglon," cried the little man with a salute more profound than before. "We're prood to see you, and hoo are they a' in France?"

"Tolerably well, I thank you," said Count Victor, amused at this grotesque combination of military form and familiarity.

Mungo Boyd set down the stool on which he had apparently been standing to look through the spy-hole in the door, and seized the stranger's bag. With three rapid movements of the feet, executed in the mechanical time of a soldier, he turned to the right-about, paused a second, squared his shoulders, and led the way into a most barren and chilly interior.

"This way, your honour," said he. "Ye'll paurdon my discretion, for it's a pernikity hoose this for a' the auld, bauld, gallant forms and ceremonies. I jalouse ye cam roond in a wherry frae the toon, and it's droll I never saw ye land. There was never mony got into Doom withoot the kennin' o' the garrison. It happened aince in Black Hugh's time wi' a corps o' Campbells frae Ardkinglas, and they found themselves in a wasp's bike."

The Count stumbled in the dusk of the interior, for the door had shut of itself behind them, and the corridor was unlit except by what it borrowed from an open door at the far end, leading into a room. An odour of burning peats filled the place; the sound of the sea-breakers was to be heard in a murmur as one hears far-off magic seas in a shell that is held to the ear. And Count Victor, finding all his pleasant anticipations of the character of this baronial dwelling utterly erroneous, mentally condemned Bethune to perdition as he stumbled behind the little grotesque aping the soldier's pompous manner.

The door that lent what illumination there was to his entrance was held half open by a man who cast at the visitor a glance wherein were surprise and curiosity.

"The Monsher de Montaiglon frae France," announced Mungo, stepping aside still with

the soldier's mechanical precision, and standing by the door to give dignity to the introduction and the entrance.

The Baron may have blushed for the overdone formality of his servant when he saw the style of his visitor, standing with a Kevenhuller cocked hat in one hand and fondling the up-turned moustache with the other; something of annoyance was in his tone as he curtly dismissed the servant and gave admission to the stranger, on whom he turned a questioning and slightly embarrassed countenance, handing him one of the few chairs in the most sparsely furnished of rooms.

"You are welcome, sir," he said simply in a literal rendering of his native Gaelic phrase; "take your breath. Will you have a dram, sir?"

Count Victor protested no, but his host paid no heed. "It is the custom of the country," said he, making for a cupboard and fumbling among glasses, giving, as by a good host's design, the stranger an opportunity of settling down to his new surroundings. A room ill-furnished as a monk's cell, lit by narrow windows, two of them looking to the sea and one along the coast, though not directly on it, windows sunk deep in massive walls built for a more bickering age than this. Count Victor took all in at a glance, and found revealed to him in a flash the colossal mendacity of all the Camerons, Macgregors, and Macdonalds, who had implied, if they had not deliberately stated, over many games of piquet or lansquenet at Cammercy, the magnificence of the typical Highland stronghold.

The Baron had been reading; at least beside the chair drawn up to a fire of peat that perfumed the apartment lay a book upon a table, and it was characteristic of the Count, who loved books as he loved sport, and Villon above all, that he should strain his eyes a little and tilt his head slightly to see what manner of literature prevailed in these wilds. And the book gave him great cheer, for it was an old French folio of arms, 'Les Arts de L'homme d'Epée; ou, Le Dictionnaire du Gentilhomme,' by one Sieur de Guille. Doom Castle was a curious place, but apparently Hugh Bethune was in the right when he described its master as "ane o' the auld gentry, wi' a tattie and herrin' to his dejeune, but a scholar's book open against the ale-jug." A poor Baron (of a vastly different state from the Baron of France), English spoken too, with not much of the tang of the heather in his utterance though droll of his idiom, hospitable (to judge from the proferred glass still being fumbled for in the cupboard), a man who had been in France on the right side, a reader of the *beau langage*, and a student of the lore of *arme blanche*—come, here was luck!

And the man himself? He brought forward his spirits in a bottle of quaint Dutch cut, with hollow pillars at each of its four corners and two glasses extravagantly tall of stem, and he filled out the drams upon the table, removing with some embarrassment before he did

so the book of arms. It surprised Count Victor that he should not be in the native tartan of the Scots Highlander. Instead he wore a demure coat and breeches of some dark fabric, and the wig he wore gave him all the more of the look of a lowland merchant than of a chief of clan. He was a man at least twenty years the senior of his visitor—a handsome man of his kind, dark, deliberate of his movements, bred in the courtesies, but seemingly, to the acuter intuitions of Montaiglon, possessed of one unpardonable weakness in a gentleman—a shame of his obvious penury.

"I have permitted myself, M. le Baron, to interrupt you on the counsel of a common friend," said Count Victor, anxious to put an end to a situation somewhat droll.

"After the goblet, after the goblet," said Lamond softly, himself but sipping at the rim of his glass. "It is the custom of the country—one of the few that's like to be left to us before long."

"*À la sante de la bonne cause!*" said the Count politely, choking upon the fiery liquor, and putting down the glass with an apology.

"I am come from France—from Saint Germains," he said. "You may have heard of my uncle; I am the Count de Montaiglon."

The Baron betrayed a moment's confusion.

"Do you tell me, now?" said he. "Then you are the more welcome. I wish I could say so in your own language—that is, so far as ease goes, known to me only in letters. From Saint Germains——" making a step or two up and down the room, with a shrewd glance upon his visitor in the bygoing. "H'm, I've been there on a short turn myself; there are several of the Highland gentry about the place."

"There is one Bethune.—Hugh Bethune of Ballimeanach, Baron," replied Count Victor meaningly. "Knowing that I was coming to this part of the world, and that a person of my tongue and politics might be awkwardly circumstanced in the province of Argyll, he took the liberty to give me your direction as one in whose fidelity I might repose myself. I came across the sleeve to Albion and skirted your noisy eastern coast with but one name of a friend, *pardieu*, to make the strange cliffs cheerful."

"You are very good," said the Baron simply, with half a bow. "And Hugh Bethune, now—well, well! I am proud that he should mind of his old friend in the tame Highlands. Good Hugh!"—a strange wistfulness came to the Baron's utterance—"Good Hugh! he'll wear tartan when he has the notion, I'm supposing, though, after all, he was no Gael, or a very far out one, for all that he was in the Maréschal's tail."

"I have never seen him in the tartan, beyond perhaps a waistcoat of it at a *bal masque*."

"So? And yet he was a man generally full of Highland spirit."

Count Victor smiled.

"It is perhaps his only weakness that nowadays he carries it with less dignity than he used to do. A good deal too much of the Highland spirit, M. le Baron, wears hoops, and comes into France in Leith frigates."

"Ay, man!" said the Baron, heedless of the irony, "and Hugh wears the tartan?"

"Only in the waistcoat," repeated Count Victor, complacently looking at his own scallops.

"Even that!" said the Baron, with the odd wistfulness in his voice. And then he added hurriedly, "Not that the tartan's anything wonderful. It cost the people of this country a bonny penny one way or another. There's nothing honest men will take to more readily than the breeks, says I—the douce, honest breeks——"

"Unless it be the petticoats," murmured the Count, smiling, and his fingers went to the pointing of his moustache.

"Nothing like the breeks; the philabeg was aye telling your parentage in every line, so that you could not go over the moor to Lennox there but any drover by the roadside kent you for a small clan or a family of caterans. Some people will be grumbling that the old dress should be proscribed, but what does it matter?"

"The tartan is forbidden?" guessed Count Victor, somewhat puzzled.

Doom flushed; a curious gleam came into his eyes; he turned to fumble noisily with the glasses as he replaced them in the cupboard.

"I thought that was widely enough known," said he. "Put down by the law, and perhaps a good business too. *Diaouil!*" He came back to the table with this muttered objurgation, sat and stared into the grey film of the peat-fire. "There was a story in every line," said he, "a history in every check, and we are odd creatures in the glens, Count, that we could never see the rags without minding what they told. Now the tartan's in the dye-pot, and you'll see about here but *crotal*-colour—the old stuff stained with lichen from the rock."

"Ah, what damage!" said Count Victor with sympathetic tone. "But there are some who wear it yet?"

The Baron started slightly. "Sir?" he questioned, without taking his eyes from the embers.

"The precipitancy of my demands upon your gate and your hospitality must have something of an air of impertinence," said Count Victor briskly, unbuckling his sword and laying it before him on the table; "but the cause of it lay with several zealous gentlemen, who were apparently not affected by any law against tartan, for tartan they wore, and *sans culottes* too, though the dirt of them made it difficult to be certain of either fact. In the East it is customary, I believe, for the infidel to take off his boots when he intrudes on sacred ground; nothing is said about stockings, but I had to divest myself of both boots and stockings. I waded into Doom a few minutes ago, for all the world like an oyster-man with my bag on my back."

"Good God!" cried the Baron. "I forgot the tide. Could you not have whistled?"

"Whole operas, my dear M. le Baron, but the audience behind me would have made the performance so necessarily allegretto as to be ineffective. It was wade at once or pipe and perish. *Mon Dieu!* but I believe you are right; as an honest man I cannot approve of my first introduction to your tartan."

"It must have been one of the watches; it must have been some of the king's soldiers," suggested the Baron.

Count Victor shrugged his shoulders. "I think I know a red-coat when I see one," said he. "These were quite unlicensed hawks, with the hawk's call for signal too."

"Are you sure?" cried the Baron, standing up, and still with an unbelieving tone.

"My dear M. le Baron, I killed one of the birds to look at the feathers. That is the confounded thing too! So unceremonious a manner of introducing myself to a country where I desire me above all to be circumspect; is it not so?"

As he spoke he revealed the agitation that his flippant words had tried to cloak—by a scarcely perceptible tremor of the hand that drummed the table, a harder note in his voice, and the biting of his moustache. He saw that Doom guessed his perturbation, and he compelled himself to a careless laugh, lounged to his feet, twisted his moustache points, drew forth his rapier with a flourish, and somewhat theatrically saluted and lunged in space as if the gesture gave his tension ease.

The Baron for a moment forgot the importance of what he had been told as he watched the graceful beauty of the movement, that revealed not only some eccentricity but personal vanity of a harmless kind and wholesome tastes and talents.

"Still I'm a little in the dark," he said when the point dropped and Count Victor recovered.

"Pardon," said his guest. "I am vexed at what you may perhaps look on as a trifle. The ruffians attacked me a mile or two farther up the coast, shot my horse below me, and chased me to the very edge of your moat. I made a feint to shoot one with my pistol, and came closer on the gold than I had intended."

"The Macfarlanes!" cried Doom, with every sign of uneasiness. "It's a pity, it's a pity; not that a man more or less of that crew makes any difference, but the affair might call for more attention to this place and your presence here than might be altogether wholesome for you or me."

He heard the story in more detail, and when Count Victor had finished, ran into an adjoining room to survey the coast from a window there. He came back with a less troubled vision.

"At least they're gone now," said he in a voice that still had a troubled note in it. "I wish I knew who it was you struck. Would it be Black Andy of Arroquhar now? If

sounded savage and alarming in the ears of Count Victor, and he fairly took to flight, the valise bobbing more ludicrously than ever on his back.

It was like the man that, in spite of dreads not to be concealed from himself, he should be seized as he sped with a notion of the grotesque figure he must present, carrying that improper burden. He must even laugh when he thought of his austere punctilious maternal aunt, the Baronne de Chenier, and fancied her horror and disgust could she behold her nephew disgracing the De Chenier blood by carrying his own baggage and outraging several centuries of devilishly fine history by running—positively running—from ill-armed footpads who had never worn breeches. She would frown, her bosom would swell till her bodice would appear to crackle at the arm-pits, the seven hairs on her upper lip would bristle all the worse against her purpling face as she cried it was the little Lyons shopkeeper in his mother's grandfather that was in his craven legs. Doubt it who will, a sense of imminent danger will not wholly obliterate the sense of humour, and Montaiglon, as he ran before the footpads, laughed softly at the Baronne.

But a short knife with a black hilt hissed past his right ear and buried three-fourths of its length in the grass, and so abruptly dispelled his sense of humour. This was ridiculous. He stopped suddenly, turned him round about in a passion, and fired one of the pistols at an unfortunate robber too late to duck among the bracken. And the marvel was that the bullet found its home, for the aim was uncertain, and the shot meant more for an emphatic protest than for attack.

The gled's cry rose once more, rose higher on the hill, echoed far off, and was twice repeated nearer hand with a dropping melancholy cadence. Gaunt forms grew up straight among the undergrowth of trees, indifferent to the other pistol, and ran back or over to where the wounded comrade lay.

"Heaven's thunder!" cried Count Victor, "I wish I had aimed more carefully." He was appalled at the apparent tragedy of his act. A suicidal regret and curiosity kept him standing where he fired, with the pistol still smoking in his hands, till there came from the men clustered round the body in the brake a loud simultaneous wail unfamiliar to his ear, but unmistakable in its import. He turned and ran wildly for the tower that had no aspect of sanctuary in it; his heart drummed noisily at his breast; his mouth parched and gaped. In upon his lips in a little dropped water; he tasted the salt of his sweating body. And then he knew weariness, great weariness, that plucked at the sinews behind his knees, and felt sore along the hips and back, the result of his days of hard riding come suddenly to the surface. Truly he was not happy.

But if he ran wearily he ran well, better at least than his pursuers, who had their own reasons for taking it more leisurely, and in a while there was neither sight nor sound of the enemy.

He was beginning to get some satisfaction from this, when, turning a bend of the path within two hundred yards of the castle, behold an unmistakable enemy barred his way! An ugly, hoggish, obese man, with bare legs most grotesquely like pillars of granite and a protuberant paunch; but the devil must have been in his legs to carry him more swiftly than thoroughbred limbs had carried Count Victor. He stood sneering in the path, turning up the right sleeve of a soiled and ragged saffron shirt with his left hand, the right being engaged most ominously with a sword of a fashion that might well convince the Frenchman he had some new methods of fence to encounter in a few minutes.

High and low looked Count Victor as he slacked his pace, seeking for some way out of this sack, releasing as he did so the small sword from the tanglement of his skirts, feeling the Mechlin deucedly in his way. As he approached closer to the man barring his path he relapsed into a walk and opened a parley in English that except for its slight accent had nothing in it of France, where he had long been the comrade of compatriots to this preposterous savage with the manners of medieval Provence when footpads lived upon Damoiselle Picoree.

"My good fellow," said he, as one might open with a lackey, "I protest I am in a hurry, for my presence makes itself much desired elsewhere. I cannot comprehend why in Heaven's name so large a regiment of you should turn out to one unfortunate traveller."

The fat man fondled the brawn of his sword-arm and seemed to gloat upon the situation.

"Come, come!" said Count Victor, affecting a cheerfulness, "my waistcoat would scarcely adorn a man of your inches, and as for my pantaloons"—he looked at the ragged kilt—"as for my pantaloons, now on one's honour, would you care for them? They are so essentially a matter of custom."

He would have bantered it on in this strain up to the very nose of the enemy, but the man in his path was utterly unresponsive to his humour. In truth he did not understand a word of the nobleman's pleasantry. He uttered something like a war-cry, threw his bonnet off a head as bald as an egg, and smote out vigorously with his broadsword.

Count Victor fired the pistol *à bout portant* with deliberation; the flint, in the familiar irony of fate, missed fire, and there was nothing more to do with the treacherous weapon but to throw it in the face of the Highlander. It struck full; the trigger-guard gashed the jaw and the metalled butt spoiled the sight of an eye.

"This accounts for the mace

in the De Chenier quartering," thought the Count whimsically. "It is obviously the weapon of the family." And he drew the rapier forth.

A favourite, a familiar arm, as the carriage of his head made clear at any time, he knew to use it with the instinct of the eyelash, but it seemed absurdly inadequate against the broad long weapon of his opponent, who had augmented his attack with a dirk drawn in the left hand, and sought lustily to bring death to his opponent by point as well as edge. A light dress rapier obviously must do its business quickly if it was not to suffer from the flailing blow of the claymore, and yet Count Victor did not wish to increase the evil impression of his first visit to this country by a second homicide, even in self-defence. He measured the paunched rascal with a rapid eye, and with a flick at the left wrist disarmed him of his poignard. Furiously the Gael beat with the sword, closing up too far on his opponent. Count Victor broke ground, beat an appeal that confused his adversary, lunged, and skewered him through the thick of the active arm.

The Highlander dropped his weapon and bawled lamentably as he tried to stanch the copious blood; and safe from his further interference, Count Victor took to his heels again.

Where the encounter with the obese and now discomfited Gael took place was within a hundred yards of the castle, whose basement and approach were concealed by a growth of stunted whin. Towards the castle Count Victor rushed, still hearing the shouts in the wood behind, and as he seemed, in spite of his burden, to be gaining ground upon his pursuers, he was elate at the prospect of escape. In his gladness he threw a taunting cry behind, a hunter's greenwood challenge.

And then he came upon the edge of the sea. The sea! *Peste!* That he should never have thought of that! There was the castle, truly, beetling against the breakers, very cold, very arrogant upon its barren promontory. He was not twenty paces from its walls, and yet it might as well have been a league away, for he was cut off from it by a natural moat of sea-water that swept about it in yeasty little waves. It rode like a ship, oddly independent of aspect, self-contained, inviolable, eternally apart, for ever by nature indifferent to the mainland, where a Montaiglon was vulgarly quarrelling with *sans culottes*.

For a moment or two he stood bewildered. There was no drawbridge to this eccentric moat; there was, on this side of the rock at least, not so little as a boat; if Lamond ever held intercourse with the adjacent isle of Scotland he must seemingly swim. Very well; the Count de Montaiglon, guilty of many outrages against his ancestry to-day, must swim too if that were called for. And it looked as if that were the only alternative. Vainly he called

and whistled; no answer came from the castle, that he might have thought a deserted ruin if a column of smoke did not rise from some of its chimneys.

It was his good fortune that for some reason the pursuit was no longer apparent. The dim woods behind seemed to have swallowed up sight and sound of the broken men, who, at fault, were following up their quarry to the castle of Mac-Cailen Mor instead of to that of Baron Lamond. He had therefore time to prepare himself for his next step. He sat on the shore and took off his elegant long boots, the quite charming silk stockings so unlike travel in the wilds; then looked dubiously at his limbs and at the castle. No, manifestly, an approach so frank was not to be thought of, and he compromised by unbuttoning the foot of his pantaloons and turning them over his knees. In any case, if one had to swim over that yeasty and alarming barrier, his clothing must get wet. He would wade as far as he could, and if he must, swim the rest.

With the boots and the valise and the *bas de soie* and the skirts of his coats tucked high in his arms, the Count waded into the tide, that chilled deliciously after the heat of his flight.

But it was ridiculous! It was the most condemnable folly! His face burned with shame as he found himself half-way over the channel and the waves no higher than his ankles. It was to walk through a few inches of water that he had nearly stripped to nature!

And a woman was laughing at him, *morbleu!* Decidedly a woman was laughing—a young woman, he could wager, with a monstrously musical laugh, by St Denys, and witnessing (though he could not see her even had he wished) this farce from an upper window of the tower. He stood for a moment irresolute, half inclined to retreat from the ridicule that never failed to affect him more unpleasantly than danger the most dire; his face and neck flamed; he forgot all about the full-bosomed Baronne or remembered her only to agree that nobility demanded some dignity even in fleeing from an enemy. But the shouts of the pursuers that had died away in the distance grew again in the neighbourhood, and he pocketed his diffidence and resumed his boots, then sought the entrance to a dwelling that had no hospitable portal to the shore.

Close at hand the edifice gained in austerity and dignity while it lost the last of its scanty air of hospitality. Its walls were of a rough rubble of granite and whinstone, grown upon at the upper storeys with grasses and weeds wafted upon the ledges by the winds that blow indifferent, bringing the green messages of peace from God. A fortalice, dark, square-built, flanked to the southern corner by a round turret, lit by few windows, and these but tiny and suspicious, it was as Scots and arrogant as the thistle that had pricked Count

Victor's feet when first he set foot upon the islet.

A low wall surrounded a patch of garden-ground to the rear, one corner of it grotesquely adorned with a bower all bedraggled with rains, yet with the red berry of the dog-rose gleaming in the rusty leafage like grapes of fire. He passed through the little garden and up to the door. Its arch, ponderous, deep-moulded, hung a scowling eyebrow over the black and studded oak, and over all was an escutcheon with a blazon of hands fesswise and castles embattled, and the legend—

"DOOM.

Man, Behauld the End of All. Be Nocht
Wiser than the Hiest. Hope in God!"

He stood on tiptoe to read the more easily the time-blurred characters, his baggage at his feet, his fingers pressed against the door. Some of the words he could not decipher nor comprehend, but the first was plain to his understanding.

"Doom!" said he airily and half aloud. "Doom! *Quelle félicité!* It is an omen."

Then he rapped lightly on the oak with the pommel of his sword.

CHAPTER III.—BARON OF DOOM.

Deep in some echoing corridor of the stronghold a man's voice rose in the Gaelic language, ringing in a cry for service, but no one came.

Count Victor stepped back and looked again upon the storm-battered front, the neglected garden, the pathetic bower. He saw smoke but at a single chimney, and broken glass in the little windows, and other evidences that suggested meagre soup was common fare in Doom.

"M. Bethune's bowl," he said to himself, "is not likely to be brimming over if he is to drink it here. M. le Baron shouting there is too much of the gentleman to know the way to the back of his own door; Glengarry again for a louis!—Glengarry *sans feu ni lieu*, but always the most punctilious when most nearly penniless."

Impatiently he switched with the sword at the weeds about his feet; then reddened at the instinct of apprehension that had made him all unconsciously bare the weapon at a door whose hospitality he was seeking, rapped again, and sheathed the steel.

The door opened, showing on the threshold, with a stool in his hand, a very little bow-legged man of fifty years or thereby, having a face all lined like a chart with wrinkles, ruddy at the cheeks as a winter apple, and attired in a mulberry-brown. He put his heels together with a mechanical precision and gravely gave a military salute.

"Doom?" inquired Count Victor formally, with a foot inside the door.

"Jist that," answered the servitor a little dryly, and yet

with a smile puckering his face as he put an opposing toe of a coarse unbuckled brogue under the instep of the stranger. The accent of the reply smacked of Fife; when he heard it, Count Victor at a leap was back in the port of Dysart, where it shrank beneath tall rocks, and he was hearing again for the first time with an amused wonder the native mariners crying to each other on the quays.

"Is your master at home?" he asked.

"At hame, quo' he! It wad depend a'thegether on wha wants to ken," said the servant cautiously. Then in a manner ludicrously composed of natural geniality and burlesque importance, "It's the auld styles aboot Doom, sir, though there's few o' us left to keep them up, and whether the Baron's oot or in is a thing that has to be studied maist scrupulously before the like o' me could say."

"My name is De Montaiglon; I am newly from France; I——"

"Step your ways in, Monsher de Montaiglon," cried the little man with a salute more profound than before. "We're prood to see you, and hoo are they a' in France?"

"Tolerably well, I thank you," said Count Victor, amused at this grotesque combination of military form and familiarity.

Mungo Boyd set down the stool on which he had apparently been standing to look through the spy-hole in the door, and seized the stranger's bag. With three rapid movements of the feet, executed in the mechanical time of a soldier, he turned to the right-about, paused a second, squared his shoulders, and led the way into a most barren and chilly interior.

"This way, your honour," said he. "Ye'll paurdon my discretion, for it's a pernikity hoose this for a' the auld, bauld, gallant forms and ceremonies. I jalouse ye cam roond in a wherry frae the toon, and it's droll I never saw ye land. There was never mony got into Doom withoot the kennin' o' the garrison. It happened aince in Black Hugh's time wi' a corps o' Campbells frae Ardkinglas, and they found themselves in a wasp's bike."

The Count stumbled in the dusk of the interior, for the door had shut of itself behind them, and the corridor was unlit except by what it borrowed from an open door at the far end, leading into a room. An odour of burning peats filled the place; the sound of the sea-breakers was to be heard in a murmur as one hears far-off magic seas in a shell that is held to the ear. And Count Victor, finding all his pleasant anticipations of the character of this baronial dwelling utterly erroneous, mentally condemned Bethune to perdition as he stumbled behind the little grotesque aping the soldier's pompous manner.

The door that lent what illumination there was to his entrance was held half open by a man who cast at the visitor a glance wherein were surprise and curiosity.

"The Monsher de Montaiglon frae France," announced Mungo, stepping aside still with

the soldier's mechanical precision, and standing by the door to give dignity to the introduction and the entrance.

The Baron may have blushed for the overdone formality of his servant when he saw the style of his visitor, standing with a Kevenhuller cocked hat in one hand and fondling the up-turned moustache with the other; something of annoyance was in his tone as he curtly dismissed the servant and gave admission to the stranger, on whom he turned a questioning and slightly embarrassed countenance, handing him one of the few chairs in the most sparsely furnished of rooms.

"You are welcome, sir," he said simply in a literal rendering of his native Gaelic phrase; "take your breath. Will you have a dram, sir?"

Count Victor protested no, but his host paid no heed. "It is the custom of the country," said he, making for a cupboard and fumbling among glasses, giving, as by a good host's design, the stranger an opportunity of settling down to his new surroundings. A room ill-furnished as a monk's cell, lit by narrow windows, two of them looking to the sea and one along the coast, though not directly on it, windows sunk deep in massive walls built for a more bickering age than this. Count Victor took all in at a glance, and found revealed to him in a flash the colossal mendacity of all the Camerons, Macgregors, and Macdonalds, who had implied, if they had not deliberately stated, over many games of piquet or lansquenet at Cammercy, the magnificence of the typical Highland stronghold.

The Baron had been reading; at least beside the chair drawn up to a fire of peat that perfumed the apartment lay a book upon a table, and it was characteristic of the Count, who loved books as he loved sport, and Villon above all, that he should strain his eyes a little and tilt his head slightly to see what manner of literature prevailed in these wilds. And the book gave him great cheer, for it was an old French folio of arms, 'Les Arts de L'homme d'Epée; ou, Le Dictionnaire du Gentilhomme,' by one Sieur de Guille. Doom Castle was a curious place, but apparently Hugh Bethune was in the right when he described its master as "ane o' the auld gentry, wi' a tattie and herrin' to his dejeune, but a scholar's book open against the ale-jug." A poor Baron (of a vastly different state from the Baron of France), English spoken too, with not much of the tang of the heather in his utterance though droll of his idiom, hospitable (to judge from the proferred glass still being fumbled for in the cupboard), a man who had been in France on the right side, a reader of the *beau langage*, and a student of the lore of *arme blanche*—come, here was luck!

And the man himself? He brought forward his spirits in a bottle of quaint Dutch cut, with hollow pillars at each of its four corners and two glasses extravagantly tall of stem, and he filled out the drams upon the table, removing with some embarrassment before he did

so the book of arms. It surprised Count Victor that he should not be in the native tartan of the Scots Highlander. Instead he wore a demure coat and breeches of some dark fabric, and the wig he wore gave him all the more of the look of a lowland merchant than of a chief of clan. He was a man at least twenty years the senior of his visitor—a handsome man of his kind, dark, deliberate of his movements, bred in the courtesies, but seemingly, to the acuter intuitions of Montaiglon, possessed of one unpardonable weakness in a gentleman—a shame of his obvious penury.

"I have permitted myself, M. le Baron, to interrupt you on the counsel of a common friend," said Count Victor, anxious to put an end to a situation somewhat droll.

"After the goblet, after the goblet," said Lamond softly, himself but sipping at the rim of his glass. "It is the custom of the country—one of the few that's like to be left to us before long."

"*À la sante de la bonne cause!*" said the Count politely, choking upon the fiery liquor, and putting down the glass with an apology.

"I am come from France—from Saint Germains," he said. "You may have heard of my uncle; I am the Count de Montaiglon."

The Baron betrayed a moment's confusion.

"Do you tell me, now?" said he. "Then you are the more welcome. I wish I could say so in your own language—that is, so far as ease goes, known to me only in letters. From Saint Germains——" making a step or two up and down the room, with a shrewd glance upon his visitor in the bygoing. "H'm, I've been there on a short turn myself; there are several of the Highland gentry about the place."

"There is one Bethune.—Hugh Bethune of Ballimeanach, Baron," replied Count Victor meaningly. "Knowing that I was coming to this part of the world, and that a person of my tongue and politics might be awkwardly circumstanced in the province of Argyll, he took the liberty to give me your direction as one in whose fidelity I might repose myself. I came across the sleeve to Albion and skirted your noisy eastern coast with but one name of a friend, *pardieu*, to make the strange cliffs cheerful."

"You are very good," said the Baron simply, with half a bow. "And Hugh Bethune, now—well, well! I am proud that he should mind of his old friend in the tame Highlands. Good Hugh!"—a strange wistfulness came to the Baron's utterance—"Good Hugh! he'll wear tartan when he has the notion, I'm supposing, though, after all, he was no Gael, or a very far out one, for all that he was in the Maréschal's tail."

"I have never seen him in the tartan, beyond perhaps a waistcoat of it at a *bal masque*."

"So? And yet he was a man generally full of Highland spirit."

Count Victor smiled.

"It is perhaps his only weakness that nowadays he carries it with less dignity than he used to do. A good deal too much of the Highland spirit, M. le Baron, wears hoops, and comes into France in Leith frigates."

"Ay, man!" said the Baron, heedless of the irony, "and Hugh wears the tartan?"

"Only in the waistcoat," repeated Count Victor, complacently looking at his own scallops.

"Even that!" said the Baron, with the odd wistfulness in his voice. And then he added hurriedly, "Not that the tartan's anything wonderful. It cost the people of this country a bonny penny one way or another. There's nothing honest men will take to more readily than the breeks, says I—the douce, honest breeks——"

"Unless it be the petticoats," murmured the Count, smiling, and his fingers went to the pointing of his moustache.

"Nothing like the breeks; the philabeg was aye telling your parentage in every line, so that you could not go over the moor to Lennox there but any drover by the roadside kent you for a small clan or a family of caterans. Some people will be grumbling that the old dress should be proscribed, but what does it matter?"

"The tartan is forbidden?" guessed Count Victor, somewhat puzzled.

Doom flushed; a curious gleam came into his eyes; he turned to fumble noisily with the glasses as he replaced them in the cupboard.

"I thought that was widely enough known," said he. "Put down by the law, and perhaps a good business too. *Diaouil!*" He came back to the table with this muttered objurgation, sat and stared into the grey film of the peat-fire. "There was a story in every line," said he, "a history in every check, and we are odd creatures in the glens, Count, that we could never see the rags without minding what they told. Now the tartan's in the dye-pot, and you'll see about here but *crotal*-colour—the old stuff stained with lichen from the rock."

"Ah, what damage!" said Count Victor with sympathetic tone. "But there are some who wear it yet?"

The Baron started slightly. "Sir?" he questioned, without taking his eyes from the embers.

"The precipitancy of my demands upon your gate and your hospitality must have something of an air of impertinence," said Count Victor briskly, unbuckling his sword and laying it before him on the table; "but the cause of it lay with several zealous gentlemen, who were apparently not affected by any law against tartan, for tartan they wore, and *sans culottes* too, though the dirt of them made it difficult to be certain of either fact. In the East it is customary, I believe, for the infidel to take off his boots when he intrudes on sacred ground; nothing is said about stockings, but I had to divest myself of both boots and stockings. I waded into Doom a few minutes ago, for all the world like an oyster-man with my bag on my back."

"Good God!" cried the Baron. "I forgot the tide. Could you not have whistled?"

"Whole operas, my dear M. le Baron, but the audience behind me would have made the performance so necessarily allegretto as to be ineffective. It was wade at once or pipe and perish. *Mon Dieu!* but I believe you are right; as an honest man I cannot approve of my first introduction to your tartan."

"It must have been one of the watches; it must have been some of the king's soldiers," suggested the Baron.

Count Victor shrugged his shoulders. "I think I know a red-coat when I see one," said he. "These were quite unlicensed hawks, with the hawk's call for signal too."

"Are you sure?" cried the Baron, standing up, and still with an unbelieving tone.

"My dear M. le Baron, I killed one of the birds to look at the feathers. That is the confounded thing too! So unceremonious a manner of introducing myself to a country where I desire me above all to be circumspect; is it not so?"

As he spoke he revealed the agitation that his flippant words had tried to cloak—by a scarcely perceptible tremor of the hand that drummed the table, a harder note in his voice, and the biting of his moustache. He saw that Doom guessed his perturbation, and he compelled himself to a careless laugh, lounged to his feet, twisted his moustache points, drew forth his rapier with a flourish, and somewhat theatrically saluted and lunged in space as if the gesture gave his tension ease.

The Baron for a moment forgot the importance of what he had been told as he watched the graceful beauty of the movement, that revealed not only some eccentricity but personal vanity of a harmless kind and wholesome tastes and talents.

"Still I'm a little in the dark," he said when the point dropped and Count Victor recovered.

"Pardon," said his guest. "I am vexed at what you may perhaps look on as a trifle. The ruffians attacked me a mile or two farther up the coast, shot my horse below me, and chased me to the very edge of your moat. I made a feint to shoot one with my pistol, and came closer on the gold than I had intended."

"The Macfarlanes!" cried Doom, with every sign of uneasiness. "It's a pity, it's a pity; not that a man more or less of that crew makes any difference, but the affair might call for more attention to this place and your presence here than might be altogether wholesome for you or me."

He heard the story in more detail, and when Count Victor had finished, ran into an adjoining room to survey the coast from a window there. He came back with a less troubled vision.

"At least they're gone now," said he in a voice that still had a troubled note in it. "I wish I knew who it was you struck. Would it be Black Andy of Arroquhar now? If

it's Andy, the gang will be crying 'Loch Sloy!' about the house in a couple of nights; if it was a common man of the tribe, there might be no more about it, for we're too close on the Duke's gallows to be meddled with noisily; that's the first advantage I ever found in my neighbourhood."

"He was a man of a long habit of body," said Count Victor, "and he fell with a grunt."

"Then it was not Andy. Andy is like a hogshead—a blob of creesh with a turnip on the top—and he would fall with a curse."

"Name of a pipe! I know him; he debated the last few yards of the way with me, and I gave him De Chenier's mace in the jaw."

"Sir?"

"I put him slightly out of countenance with the butt and trigger-guard of my pistol. Again I must apologise, dear Baron, for so unceremonious and ill-tempered an approach to your hospitality. You will confess it is a sort of country the foibles of whose people one has to grow accustomed to, and Bethune gave me no guidance for such an emergency as banditti on the fringe of Argyll's notoriously humdrum Court."

"Odd!" repeated Doom. "Will you step this way?" He led Count Victor to the window that commanded the coast, and their heads together filled the narrow space as they looked out. It was a wondrous afternoon. The sun swung low in a majestic sky, whose clouds of gold and purple seemed to the gaze of Montaiglon a continuation of the actual hills of wood and heather whereof they were the culmination. He saw, it seemed to him, the myriad peaks, the vast cavernous mountain clefts of a magic land, the abode of seraphim and the sun's eternal smile.

"God is good!" said he again, no way reverently, but with some emotion. "I thought I had left for ever the place of hope, and here's paradise with open doors." Then he looked upon the nearer country, upon the wooded hills, the strenuous shoulders of the bens upholding all that glory of sinking sunshine, and on one he saw upstanding, a vulgar blotch upon the landscape, a gaunt long spar with an overhanging arm.

"Ah!" he said airily, "there is civilisation in the land after all."

"Plenty of law at least," said the Baron. "Law of its kind—MacCailein law. His Grace, till the other day, as it might be, was Justice-General of the shire, Sheriff of the same, Regality Lord, with rights of pit and gallows. My place goes up to the knowe beside his gallows; but his Grace's regality comes beyond this, and what does he do but put up his dule-tree there that I may see it from my window and mind the fact. It's a fine country this; man, I love it! I'm bound to be loving it, as the saying goes, waking and sleeping, and it brought me back from France, that I had

no illwill to, and kept me indoors in the 'Forty-five,' though my heart was in the rising, as Bethune would tell you. A grand country out and in, wet and dry, winter and summer, and only that tree there and what it meant to mar the look and comfort of it. But here I'm at my sentiments and you starving, I am sure, for something to eat."

He moved from the window out at which he had been gazing with a fondness that surprised and amused his visitor, and called loudly for Mungo.

In a moment the little retainer was at the door jauntily saluting in his military manner.

"Hae ye been foraging the day, Mungo?" asked the master indulgently.

"Na, na, there was nae need wi' a commissariat weel provided for voluntary. Auld Dugald brought in his twa kain hens yesterday, and the cauld corp o' ane o' them's in the pantry. There's the end o' a hench o' venison frae Strathlachlan, and twa oors syne, when the tide was oot, there was beef padovies and stoved howtowdies, but I gied them to twa gaun-aboot bodies."

They both looked inquiringly at Count Victor.

"I regret the what-do-you-call-it?—the stoved howtowdy," said he, laughing, "more for the sound of it than for any sense its name conveys to me."

"There's meat as weel as music in it, as the fox said when he ate the bagpipes," said Mungo. "There's waur nor howtowdy. And oh! I forgot the het victual, there's jugged hare."

"Is the hare ready?" asked the Baron suspiciously.

"It's no jist a'thegether what ye micht ca' ready," answered Mungo without hesitation; "but it can be here het in nae time, and micht agree wi' the Count better than the cauld fowl."

"Tell Annapla to do the best she can," broke in the Baron on his servant's cheerful garrulity; and Mungo with another salute disappeared.

"How do your women-folk like the seclusion of Doom?" asked Count Victor, to make conversation while the refection was in preparation. "With the sea about you so, and the gang of my marauding obese friend in the wood behind, I should think you had little difficulty in keeping them under your eye."

The Baron was obviously confused. "Mungo's quite enough to keep his eye on Annapla," said he. "He has the heart and fancy to command a garrison; there's a drum for ever beating in his head, a whistle aye fifing in his lug, and he will amuse you with his conceits of soldiering ancient and modern, a trade he thinks the more of because Heaven made him so unfit to become prentice to it. Good Mungo! there have been worse men; indeed what need I grudge admitting there have been few better? He has seen this place more bien than it is to-day in my father's time, and in my own too before the lawpleas ate us up; you will excuse

his Scots freedom of speech, Count, he——"

A shot rang outside in some shrubbery upon the mainland, suddenly putting an end to Doom's conversation. Count Victor, sure that the Macfarlanes were there again, ran to the window and looked out, while his host in the rear bit his lip with every sign of annoyance. As Montaiglon looked he saw Mungo emerge from the shrubbery with a rabbit in his hand and push off hurriedly in a little boat, which apparently was in use for communication with the shore under such circumstances.

"And now," said the Count, without comment upon what he had seen, "I think, with your kind permission, I shall change my boots before eating."

"There's plenty of time for that, I jalouse," said Doom, smiling somewhat guiltily, and he showed his guest to a room in the turret.

It was up a flight of corkscrew stairs, and lit with singular poverty by an orifice more of the nature of a port-hole for a piece than a window, and this port or window, well out in the angle of the turret, commanded a view of the southward wall or curtain of the castle.

Montaiglon, left to himself, opened the bag that Mungo had placed in readiness for him in what was evidently the guest-room of the castle, transformed the travelling half of himself into something that was more in conformity with the gay nature of his upper costume, complacently surveyed the result when finished, and hummed a *chanson* of Pierre Gringoire's, altogether unremembering the encounter in the wood, the dead robber, and the stern nature of his embassy here so far from France.

He bent to close the valise, and with a start abruptly concluded his song at the sight of a miniature with the portrait of a woman looking at him from the bottom of the bag.

"*Mort de ma vie!* what a fool I am, what a forgetful *vengeur*, to be chanting Gringoire in the house of Doom and my quarry still to hunt!" His voice had of a sudden gained a stern, a cruel, accent; the pleasantness of his aspect—that came almost wholly from his eyes—became clouded by a frown. Looking round the constricted room, and realising how like a prison-cell it was compared with what he had expected, he felt oppressed as with the want of air. He looked vainly about the window for latch or hinge to open it, and as he did so glanced along the castle wall painted yellow by the declining sun. He noticed idly that some one was putting out upon the sill of a window on a lower stage what might have been a green kerchief had not the richness of its fabric and design suggested more a pennon or banneret. It was carefully placed by a woman's hands—the woman herself unseen. The incident recalled an old exploit of his own in Marney, and a flood of humorous memories of amorous intrigue.

"Mademoiselle Annapla," said he whimsically, "has a lover, and

here's his signal. The Baron's daughter? the Baron's niece? the Baron's ward? or merely the Baron's domestic? M. Bethune's document suffers infernally from the fault of being too curt. He might at least have indicated the fair recluse."

CHAPTER IV.—WANTED, A SPY.

The wail of a mountain pipe, poorly played, as any one accustomed to its strains would have admitted, even if the instrument was one he loved, and altogether execrable in the ears of Montaiglon, called him back to the *salle*, where Doom joined him in a meal whereof good Mungo's jugged hare formed no part. Mungo, who had upheld ancient ceremony by his crude performance on the *piob mhor*, was the attendant upon the table,—an office he undertook with his bonnet on his head, "in token," as his master whisperingly explained to Count Victor, "of his sometimes ill-informed purpose of conducting every formal task in Doom upon the strict letter of military codes as pertained in camps, garrisons, and strongholds." It was amusing to witness the poor fellow's pompous precision of movement as he stood behind his master's chair or helped the guest to his humble meal; the rigidity of his inactive moments, or the ridiculous jerkiness with which he passed a platter as 'twere to the time of a drill-sergeant's baton. More amusing still to one able, like Count Victor, to enter into the humour of the experience, was it to have his garrulity get the better of him in spite of the military punctilio.

"The Baron was telling me aboot your exploit wi' the Loch Sloy pairty. Man! did I no' think ye had come by boat," he whispered over a tendered ale-glass. "It was jist my luck to miss sic a grand ploy. I wad hae backed ye to haud the water against Black Andy and all his clan, and they're no' slack at a tulzie."

"Ye may be grand in a fight, Mungo, but only a middling man at forage," interrupted his master. "I think ye said jugged hare?"

"It wasna my faut," explained the domestic, "that ye havena what was steepulated; the Baron wadna bide till the beast was cooked."

Doom laughed. "Come, come, Mungo," said he, "the Count could scarcely be expected to wait for the cooking of an animal running wild in the bracken twenty minutes ago."

"Oh, it disna tak' sae terrible lang to cook a hare," said the unabashed retainer.

"But was it a hare after a', Mungo?" asked his master. "Are ye sure it wasna a rabbit?"

"A rabbit!" cried he in astonishment; then more cautiously, "Weel, if it was a rabbit, it was a gey big ane, that's a' I can say," and he covered his perturbation by a retreat from the room to resume

his office of musician, which, it appeared, demanded a tune after dinner as well as before it.

What had seemed to Montaiglon a harsh, discordant torturing of reeds when heard on the stair outside his chamber, seemed somehow more mellowed and appropriate — pleasing even—when it came from the garden outside the castle, on whose grass-grown walk the little lowlander strutted as he played the evening melody of the house of Doom—a pibroch all imbued with passion and with melancholy. The distance lulled it into something almost less than human music, into a harmony with the monotone of the wave that thundered against the rock; it seemed the voice of choiring mermen; it had the bitterness, the agonised remembrance, of the sea's profound; it was full of hints of stormy nights and old wars. For a little Doom and his visitor sat silent listening to it, the former, with a strain upon his countenance, tapping nervously with his fingers upon the arm of his chair.

"An old custom in the Highlands," he explained. "I set, perhaps, too little store by it myself, but Mungo likes to maintain it, though he plays the pipe but indifferently, and at this distance you might think the performance not altogether without merit."

"I love all music," replied Count Victor with polite ambiguity, and he marvelled at the signs of some deep feeling in his host.

Till a late hour they sat together while Count Victor explained his mission to the Highlands. He told much, but, to be sure, he did not at first tell all. He recounted the evidences of the spy's guilt as a correspondent with the British Government, whose pay he drew while sharing the poor fortunes and the secrets of the exiled Jacobites. "Iscariot, my dear Baron," he protested, "was a Bayard compared with this wretch. His presence in your locality should pollute the air; have you not felt a malaise?"

"It's dooms hard," admitted the Baron, throwing up distressed hands, "but, man, I'm feared he's not the only one. Do you know, I could mention well-kent names far ben in the Cause—men not of hereabouts at all, but of Lochaber no less, though you may perhaps not guess all that means — and they're in Paris up to the elbow now in the same trade. It's well known to some of yourselves, or should be, and it puzzles me that you should come to the shire of Argyll on account of one, as I take it, no worse than three or four you might have found by stepping across the road to Roisin's coffee-house in the Rue Vaugirard. The commoners in the late troubles have been leal enough, I'll give them that credit, but some of the gentry wag their tongues for Prince Tearlach and ply their pens for Geordie's pay."

The servant came in with two candles, placed them on the table, and renewed the fire. He had on a great woollen

night-cowl of gaudy hue with a superb tassel that bobbed grotesquely over his beady eyes.

"I'll awa' to my bed, if it's your will, Baron," said he with the customary salute. "I was thinkin' it might be needful for me to bide up a while later in case ony o' the Coont's freends came the way; but the tide'll keep them aff till mornin' anyway, and I'm sure we'll meet them a' the baulder then if we hae a guid sleep." He got permission to retire, and passed into the inky darkness of the corridor, and crept to that part of the vacant dwelling in which he had his bed.

"There might be another reason for my coming here," said Montaiglon, resuming the conversation where Mungo's entrance had broken it off. "In this affair there was a lady. I knew her once." He paused with a manner showing discomposure.

"And there was liking; I can comprehend," said Doom with sympathy.

"Liking is but love without wings," said Montaiglon. "My regard soared above the clay; I loved her, and I think she was not indifferent to me till this man came in her way. He had, they say, the devil's tongue; at least he had the devil's heart, and she died six months ago with her head on my arm. I could tell you the story, M. le Baron, but it is in all the books, and you can fancy it easily. She died forgiving her betrayer, and sending a message to that effect by me. I come to deliver it, and, by God! to push it to his heart."

"It is a dangerous errand in this country and at this time," said Doom, looking into the fire.

"Ah! but you did not know Cecile," replied Montaiglon, simply.

"But I know the human heart. I know it in any man under the sober age of thirty. Better to let it rest this. Excuse my interference. It does not matter much to me that it should be out of my house you should go seeking for your vengeance, but I'm an older man than you, and have learned how quickly the worst misfortunes and wrongs may be forgotten. In your place I would leave this man to the punishment of his own conscience."

Montaiglon laughed bitterly. "That," said he, "is to assume a mechanism that in his case never existed. Pardon me, I pray you, but I prefer the old reckoning, which will be all the fairer because he has the reputation of being a good swordsman, and I am not without some practice."

"And the man's name? you have not mentioned it."

"But there you puzzle me. He was eight months in France and some time in the Dutch lowlands, six of these in a lodging beside the Baigneurs on the Estrapade, Rue Dauphine. He came with no credentials but from Glengarry, and now Glengarry can give no account of him except that he had spoken familiarly to him of common friends in the Highlands."

"Oh, Glengarry — Alasdair Rhuadh!" exclaimed the Baron, drily.

"And presumed to be burdened with a dangerous name, he passed with the name of Drimdarroch."

"Drimdarroch!" repeated the Baron with some apparent astonishment.

"I have never seen the man so far as I know, for I was at Cammercy when he hung about the lady."

"Drimdarroch!" repeated Doom reflectively, "a mere land title."

"And some words he dropped in the ear of the lady made me fancy he might be found about the Court of Argyll."

"Drimdarroch! Drimdarroch! I ken no one of the name, though the name itself, for very good reasons, is well known to me. Have you any description of the man?"

"Not much. A man older than myself, dark, well-bred. I should say a man something like yourself, if you will pardon the comparison, with a less easy mind, if he remembers his friends and his past."

Doom pushed back his chair a little from the fire, but without taking his eyes from the peats, and made a curious suggestion.

"You would not take it to be me, would you?" he asked.

Count Victor laughed, with a gesture of his hands that made denial all unnecessary.

"Oh! but you do not know," went on the Baron. "Some months of caballing with our friends—even our Hielan' friends—in the France, left me with an unwholesome heart that would almost doubt my father in his grave. You mentioned the name Drimdarroch—is it not the odd thing that you should speak it to the only man in the shire that ever had the right to use it? Do you see this?" and rising he stepped to a recess in the wall, only half curtained, so that its contents overflowed into the chamber, and by a jerk of the hand revealed a strange accumulation of dusty documents in paper and in parchment. He looked at them with an aspect of disgust, and stirred them with a contemptuous toe as if he meddled with the litter of a stye.

"That's Drimdarroch!" said he, intensely bitter; "that's Drimdarroch, and Duntorvil, that's the Isles, the bonny Isles of Lochow; that's damn like to be Doom too! That and this ruckle of stones we sit in are all that's left of what was my father's and my grandfather's and their forebears back till the dark of time. And how is it, ye may ask? Let us pretermit the question till another occasion; anyway here's Drimdarroch wi' the lave, at any rate the weight of it in processes, records, caveats, multiplepoindings, actions of suspension and declarator, interim decrees, fugie warrants, compts and reckonings—God! I have the cackle of the law in my head like a ballant, and what's the wonder at that wi' all my practice?"

He stooped and picked up from the confused gatherings of legal scrivenings by fingertips that seemed to fear infection

a parchment fouled with its passage through the courts and law offices. "You're in luck indeed," said he; "for there's Drimdarroch—all that's left of it to me: the land itself is in the hands of my own doer, Petullo the writer down-by, and scab seize his bestial!"

Back he threw the relic of his patrimony; he dropped the curtain; he turned on his guest a face that tried to smile. "Come, let us sit down again," he said, "and never heed my havers. Am I not thankful to have Doom itself left me, and the company of the hills and sea? After all, there are more Drimdarrochs than one in the Highlands, for the name means just 'the place at the back of the oak-wood or the oaken shaw,' and oaks are plentiful hereabout as the lawyers are in the burgh down-by. I but mentioned it to show you the delicacy of your search, for you do not know but what I'm the very man you want, though I'm sitting here looking as if acting trusty for the Hanoverian cause did not fill my pouches."

"*Tenez!* M. Bethune was scarcely like to send me to Doom in that case," said the Count laughing.

"But Bethune, like yourself, may never have seen the man."

"But yes, it is true, he did not see him any more than I did. Drimdarroch, by all accounts, was a spendthrift, a player, a *bavard*, his great friends, Glengarry and another Scot, Balhaldie——"

"Oh, Balhaldie! blethering Balhaldie!" cried Doom, contempt upon his countenance. "And Balhaldie would sell him, I'll warrant. He seems, this Drimdarroch, to have been dooms unlucky in his friends. I say all I've said to you, Count, because you're bound to find it out for yourself some day if you prosecute your search here, and you might be coming round to me at last with your ower-ready pistol when I was ill-prepared to argue out my identity. Furthermore, I do not know the man you want. About the castle down-by his Grace has a corps of all kinds that you might pick from nine times out of ten without striking an honest man. Some of them are cadets of his own family, always blunt opponents of mine, and of our cause here and elsewhere; some are incomers, as we call them; a few of them from clans apparently friendly to us when in other quarters, but traitors and renegades at the heart; some are spies habit and repute. There's not a friend of mine among them, not in all the fat and prosperous rabble of them; but I wish you were here on another errand, though to Doom, my poor place, you are welcome. I am a widower, a lonely man, with my own flesh and blood rebel against me,"—he checked his untimeous confidence—"and yet I have been chastened by years and some unco experiences from a truculent man to one preferring peace except at the last ditch."

"*Eh bien!* monsieur; *this* is the last ditch!" said Montaiglon. "Spy and murderer, M. le Baron, and remember I

propose to give him more than the murderer's chance when I agree to meet him on a fair field with a sword in his hand."

"I have seen you lunge, sir," said Doom meaningly; "I ken the carriage of a fencer's head; your eye's fast, your step's light; with the sword I take it Drimdarroch is condemned, and your practice with the pistol, judging from the affair with the Macfarlanes, seems pretty enough. You propose, or I'm mistaken, to make yourself the executioner. It is a step for great deliberation, and for the sake of a wanton woman——"

"Sir!" cried Montaiglon, half rising in his chair.

Doom's eyes gleamed, a quiver ran over his brow, and a furrow came to the jaw; his hand went to his side, where in other days there might have been a dagger. It was the flash of a moment, and died again almost before Montaiglon had seen and understood.

"*Mille pardons!*" said Doom with uncouth French. "I used the word in its most innocent sense, with its kindliest meaning; but I was a fool to use it at all, and I withdraw it."

Count Victor bowed his head. "So," said he. "Perhaps I am too much Quixote, for I saw her but a few times, and that briefly. She was like a—like a fine air once heard, not all to be remembered, never wholly to be forgot. She had a failing, perhaps—the error of undue affection to qualify her for a sinful world. As it was, she seemed among other women some rarity out of place—Venus at a lantern feast."

"And ye would send this man to hell that he may find his punishment in remembering her? If I thought so much of vengeance I would leave him on the earth forgetting."

"M. le Baron, I make you my compliments of your complacence," said Count Victor, rising to his feet and desirous to end the discussion. "I am only Victor de Montaiglon, poorly educated in the forgiveness of treachery, and lamentably incapable of the nobility *de cœur* that you profess. But I can be grateful; and if you give me the hospitality of your house for a day or two, I shall take care that neither it nor its owner will be implicated in my little affair. Touching retirement"—he went on with a smile—"I regret exceedingly an overpowering weariness. I have travelled since long before dawn, and burning the candle *par les deux bouts* is not, as Master Mungo hints, conducive to a vigorous reception of the Macfarlanes if they feel like retaliating to-morrow, and making your domicile the victim of my impetuosity and poor marksmanship."

Doom sighed, took up a candle, and led the way into the passage. A chill air was in the corridor, that smelled like a cellar underground, and as their footsteps sounded reverberant upon the flags uncarpeted, Doom Castle gave the stranger the impression of a vault. Fantastic shadows danced macabre in the light of the candles; they were the only furni-

ture of that part of the rough dwelling that the owner shuffled through as quickly as he could to save his guest from spying too closely the barrenness of the land. He went first to the outer door with the candle before he said good night, drew back great bars, and opened the oak. The sky was studded with pale golden stars; the open air was dense with the perfume of the wood, the saline indication of the seaware. On the rocky edge of the islet at one part showed the white fringe of the waves now more peaceful; to the north brooded enormous hills, seen dimly by the stars, couchant terrors, vague vast shapes of dolours and alarms. Doom stood long looking at them with the flame of the candle blowing inward and held above his head—a mysterious man beyond Montaiglon's comprehension. He stood behind him a pace or two, shivering in the evening air.

"You'll be seeing little there, I'll warrant, Count, but a cold night and inhospitable vacancy, hard hills and the robber haunting them. For me, that prospect is my evening prayer. I cannot go to sleep without it, for fear I wake in Paradise and find it's all by with Doom and the native hills for me."

And by that he seemed to Montaiglon more explicable: it was the lover he was; the sentimentalist, the poet, knowing the ancient secret of the animate earth, taking his hills and valleys passionately to his heart. The Frenchman bowed his sympathy and understanding.

"It's a wonder Mungo kept his word and went to bed," said the Baron, recovering his ordinary manner, "for it would just suit his whim to bide up and act sentry here, very well pleased at the chance your coming gave him of play-acting the man of war."

He bolted the door again with its great bars, then gravely preceded his guest to the foot of the turret stair, where he handed him the candle.

"You're in a dreary airt of the house," he said apologetically, "but I hope you may find it not uncomfortable. Doom is more than two-thirds but empty shell, and the bats have the old chapel above you. *Oidhche mhath!* Good night!" He turned upon his heel and was gone into the farther end of the passage.

As Montaiglon went up to his room, the guttering candle-flame, puffed at by hidden and mischievous enemies from broken ports and gun-slits, showed upon the landing lower than his own a long corridor he had not observed upon his first ascent. With the candle held high above his head he glanced into the passage, that seemed to have several doors on either hand. In a castle so sparsely occupied the very knowledge of this long and empty corridor in the neighbourhood of his sleeping apartment conferred a sense of chill and mystery. He thought he could perceive the odour of damp, decayed wood, crumbled lime, hanging rotten in stagnant airs and covered upon with the dust of years. "*Dieu!*" he exclaimed involuntarily, "this is no Cammercy." He longed

propose to give him more than the murderer's chance when I agree to meet him on a fair field with a sword in his hand."

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for some relief from the air of mystery and dread that hung about the place. A laugh would have been a revelation, a strain of song a miracle of healing. And all at once he reflected upon the Annapla as yet unseen.

"These might be her quarters," he reflected, finding a solace in the thought. The chill was at once less apparent, a pleasant glow of companionship came over him. Higher up he held the light to see the farther into the long passage, and as he did so the flame was puffed out. It seemed so human a caprice that he drew himself sharply against the wall, ready by instinct to evade any rush or thrust that was to follow. And then he smiled at his own alarm at a trick of the wind through some of Lamond's ill-patched walls, and found his consolation in the sense of companionship confirmed by sight of a thin line of light below a door mid-way up the curious passage.

"Annapla, for a louis!" he thought cheerfully. "Thank Heaven for one petticoat in Doom—though that, in truth, is to concede the lady but a scanty wardrobe." And he hummed softly as he entered his own room.

Wearied exceedingly by the toils of the day, he had no sooner thrown himself upon the bed than he slept with no need for the lullaby aid of the sea that rumoured light and soothingly round the rock of Doom.

(To be continued.)

ALMOND'S NEK.

A SMALL battle that did a big thing. We have learnt enough of the Boers during the last ten months to be able to plume ourselves on having done a good day's work when we turn 5000 of them out of a position literally terraced with trenches, nodulous with gun-pits, flanked by two mountains, the whole commanding a natural glacis about ten miles long! Without undue complacency a feat of this sort may fairly be termed a "big thing," and that is what the cheerful little hurly-burly at Almond's Nek did for her Majesty's and Natal's sake.

That appalling trinity of natural barriers—Majuba, Laing's Nek, and Pongwana — which had frowned for so many days on General Buller's little force, encamped on the far side of the Ingogo river, frowned in vain on that Monday afternoon, June 11. Just at their most "frowny" time — sundown — when the big clouds love to pile themselves angrily up behind anything grim and angry-looking on the earth beneath, and all the still South African air seems to be waiting for something awesome to happen, at that precise period about 4000 of those ugly little khaki figures, which had insulted their grandeur for so long, were gazing complacently at their innocuous backs twelve miles away to the westward. In other words, they were "turned," and as harmless as Primrose Hill.

There must always be a touch of the ludicrous in a successful turning movement to any mind whose sense of humour has not wholly succumbed to the melancholy of the veldt. Picture the weeks and weeks of digging the now disappointed Boers must have enjoyed before they could render a position so vast what it is—impregnable, a very Gibraltar looking out over a grassy sea; digging, too, in earth of heart-breaking and tool-breaking adamant, even requiring heavy blast-charges in places, before the semblance of cover is obtained! Think of the planning, the anxious disposition of trenches for the commandos to handle, the no less anxious distribution of commandos for the trenches, the cogitations as to lines of attack, and the careful placing of the gun-pits and epaulements to meet or enfilade them! If the reader has ever been burdened with the preparation of a position in any country other than basaltic South Africa, let him double—if he be a civilian, or an unsalted soldier, let him quadruple—in his mind the sum of the difficulties he can imagine appertaining to such a task. Neither soldier nor civilian will be exaggerating the industry and herculean toil of the Boers if he apply the results of his calculation to the work done on Laing's Nek. The writer has been over every intrenched

position in Natal, including, probably, at least three of the strongest in the history of defensive warfare, but he can safely say that the only one he was mercifully *not* required to negotiate "on business"—this very one of Laing's Nek—was infinitely the most impossible of them all. But there was a "way round," as the American attaché remarked to General Buller after Colenso, and General Buller saw it, and took it, to appear again on the other side, wherein—to my mind at least—there is no small amount of humour, which one can enjoy as froth, when the consummate generalship beneath it has been properly imbibed. One is tickled at little in South Africa. I have seen a knot of men laugh at the ineffectual explosion of a 40-lb. shell in their midst, so that perhaps my amusement is untimely. However, to our tale, and how it befell that her Britannic Majesty's troops in Natal were set at a mole-hill instead of the mountain they expected, though even then they would have charged manfully at the dreadful leap, so great is the trust in the strong pair of hands on the reins.

June 8 saw the seizure of Botha's Pass, one of the "might have beens" of the campaign, when the scanty Dutch garrison on the tremendous battlements and buttresses of the Drakensberg fled before a frontal attack which looked like folly to a casual observer, though it was, in truth, the outcome of careful reconnaissance. What a shambles the deep valley between Inkweloane and Spitz Kop would have been had Botha only manned his outwork in time! Inkweloane is like a huge hand to the body of the main position on the Nek, and, even if no turning movement had been intended, its loss was a serious menace to the Boer stronghold. Once in our possession, Laing's Nek *might* have fallen to a frontal attack. Denied to our artillery, it never could have. First trick to the British, albeit with a difficult hand with which to play up to it. June 9, nothing particular on the surface, though there was a mighty pulling and hauling of baggage over the steep summit of the pass, whilst the half-frozen troops thawed slightly in the wintry sunlight on the top of the Drakensberg, and wondered how they had ever got there, as they glowered down into the chasms from which they had crept the day before. June 10, a march westwards over rolling veldt, here and there burnt into great black patches, from which a most pungent and irritating dust arose to annoy the troops and hide the unusual picturesqueness of the scene. It is not often that an army is able to bowl along over a huge meadow, which reaches to the horizon, in parallel columns, the baggage-train, as good as the best, well up alongside. The halting-place for the night was Gans-Vlei Spruit, from the kopje overlooking which a couple of hundred Boers with a field-gun had been hustled by the South African Light Horse and other cavalry before the arrival of

the main column. The latter bivouacked on the flats below, sleeping as well as the intense frost of the night would allow; the 11th brigade under the shadow of the kopje itself, the 10th brigade about the road below it, and on lower ground still the veterans of the force, Colonel Hamilton's 2nd brigade, whose late commander, General Hildyard,—now raised to divisional rank,—had still further gilded his gilt spurs by his admirable management of the assault on Botha's Pass, of which he was in sole charge. An astute man, and a cool-headed, as becomes a former Chief-Professor of the Staff College, prone to writing orders of unprecedented lucidity and soundness, one of the pioneers of this wilderness of a war, withal, who had struck the first little chip from the tree, when he sent his bayonets forward at Willow Grange, so long ago as November. If he will pardon criticism from one who, by Queen's Regulations, is only permitted to be criticised, let me here lay it down that there is no general officer in this army of South Africa who has more speedily, certainly, and deservedly won the confidence of his subordinates than General Hildyard, from the day when he saved as many lives of his brigade as could be saved from the devastating *inferno* raging around them at Colenso by his timely adoption of extended order, to the movement when that same brigade, with others, was triumphantly nursed by him on to the knobby summit of Almond's Nek. But this is anticipation.

The morning of June 11, a typical morning here at this season, cold and clear, saw the army early astir, beating and stamping its 30,000 benumbed legs and arms, waiting for the five-o'clock breakfast, the smoke of whose wood-fires rose filmy and aromatic on the still frosty air. The briefest of ceremonies, breakfast, when "things is in the wind," and Quaker oats and cocoa the only fare. Then a hasty donning of dingy weather-worn braces, whose honourable scars and blemishes would send an Aldershot sergeant-major raging over to Broadmoor, followed by the gradual coagulation of dust-coloured parallelograms formed by battalions falling in. Then a long wait. The edges of the parallelograms begin to wobble and disintegrate; men are being allowed to fall out, and sit down. No hurry evidently, a state of things which in the presence of an enemy may indicate either one of two antitheses,—either that the coast is clear or that that worm, the foe, has been picked up by the scouts, the early bird of warfare, in large numbers ahead, requiring much scratching of heads and "dispositions" by invisible staffs and general officers. The present hesitation arose from a mixture of the two. Almond's Nek lies about seven miles north-east of Gans-Vlei, and was known to hold the enemy, or rather was so certain to do so that it was actually assumed to be "Boered." Between the two places runs a low ridge of

grass-fronted kopjes, protected in front by a wet spruit, enjoying flank defence and an ideal line of retreat—quite a likely draw for Boers, and absolutely necessary for the general to know if there were any there, and if so, how many. Out creeps the 11th brigade to see; long strings of men looking slim and black as they top the ridge that bounds the basin we stand in, and disappear line by line down the other side.

Another long wait for us behind, a somewhat anxious one this time. Conversation begins to assume that slightly vague and distrait manner which, one can notice, settles ever upon soldiers in safety when their comrades of other units are marching out into possible danger and death. After two hours the word comes back at last, "All clear so far, the rest to move on." The kopjes were empty, and for the rest of the day were handed over to the brigade which would have stormed them had storming been necessary.

No time was lost by the 2nd and 10th brigades in setting out, the latter on the right, working along a low saddle connecting Gans-Vlei kopje with the lately problematical ridge ahead, the former across a broad plain, preceded by the naval artillery, consisting of two 4·7 monsters, and six little sturdy 12-pounders, undoubtedly the "handy-men" of the campaign. Their place in the order of march is noteworthy, in that, at a later stage of the operations, it gave rise to a somewhat unique situation, heavy guns finding themselves occupying for a short time an artillery position actually in advance of their infantry. On the extreme right, invisible to the infantry, were Lords Dundonald and Gough, flanked on their right by a very nasty bit of mountainous ground; on the extreme left, Brocklehurst with his cavalry, very much alive to the fact that a commando was hovering on his outer flank. And so the advance proceeded for about an hour and a half across the yellow veldt, with the naval guns making a stately show as they lumbered across the flat centre of the broad-shaped plain, a little bunch of infantry (with whom was the writer) ahead, similar bunches on either flank, and behind, the parallel blocks of the 2nd brigade in columns of route, —another unusual *spectacle* in this land of creepings and crawlings, of tortuous dongas, and surprise packets in the shape of sudden kopjes and hidden spruits.

The ridge intervening between the nek and our night's bivouac was reached about midday, and from its low crest the Boer position could be discerned about 6000 yards ahead, with yet another ridge, or rather plateau, between us and it, about 3500 yards from us, and consequently somewhere near 2500 yards from the enemy. It was therefore already perfectly possible to shell the nek, and the question arose as to the desirability of pushing the heavy ordnance on to the next ridge, thereby ensuring a crushing bombardment at short

range, or of being contented with the very fair position already gained. The absence of the enemy on the intervening ground, and the advantages of the co-operation of the field-guns and howitzers with their big brethren of the sea, decided the point, and the column moved forward again. It was at this junction that the peculiar situation of the naval artillery became apparent. Accompanied only by their scanty infantry escort, they forged right ahead of the main body, and actually arrived upon the dominating top of the plateau, with nothing between them and the Boers but empty ether, and the sublime self-reliance of the mariner on shore. But this was one of our lucky days. Brightly shone the sun, none of that fierce bite in its glare that will remind certain of the Queen's soldiers of December 15, 1899, whenever they feel it again as long as they live; genial was the air, and blew softly upon the brow of the genial sailor-man, to cool him after his "yo-heave-oh'ing" at the heavy tackle up the slope. All was well, the show was "just about to commence" under the most cheerful auspices, and "Philomels" and "Fortes" spat upon their horny hands and hitched at their "brass-bound" breeches with the grin of a pugilist who knows that he is good enough for the five to one *on* odds intrusted to him.

I dwell upon this *ante-prœlium* cheerfulness, firstly, because—*pace* historical novelists and impressionist war-correspondents—it is not at all a usual state of mind with troops going into action; and, secondly, because it inexplicably pervaded all ranks on this brilliant June morning. Almond's Nek was a cheerful battle; from start to finish it "went," so to speak, with a slap, and a dash, and a grin. None of your crises or "doubtful moments" about this affair. Doubtful moments there were, but the men noted nothing and cared less for them, which is sufficient in itself to banish all doubtfulness from any moment which ever fled away into the æons of time. But this is again anticipation.

Though the big guns can certainly boast of having sighted the enemy first, the infantry were not far off, and were soon collected in manageable proximity under the lee-side of the plateau, 10th brigade still on the right, 2nd brigade still on the left. Away behind on the last ridge lay the 11th brigade, no doubt as busy with field-glasses and telescopes as their comrades ahead now were with bully-beef and biscuit. What conceivable cataclysm shall rob the British soldier of his dinner at 1 P.M.? None that I can think of. He devoured it moving forward under a rain of bullets at Colenso; he munched it lying prone under the terrific storm of shells at Vaal Krantz; nor did he miss it on more than one of the four extraordinary days of Pieter's Hill, and then only because it could not be brought to him to eat, and a man may not go to find it without per-

mission. And now behold him hard at it, a mile and three-quarters this side of the enemy, whom—if he is thinking about him at all—he proposes to reduce also to mincemeat within the next two hours.

Almond's Nek is a curiously-shaped feature, used as one is to Nature's juggling feats with earth and boulder in this country. About the nek itself there is nothing particular to notice. There is the usual mile or mile and a half's breadth of grassy down, and the usual "road"—save the mark!—disappearing over its centre at about the usual angle: like all South African nek-roads, causing the eye of the imaginative observer to dwell upon the little niche in the pass formed by its last appearance on the crest, in the constant expectation of seeing something come over it—a Kaffir, or a horseman, or a long creeping span of oxen with their little hummock of a waggon behind. Neks derive their characters solely from their walls—that is to say, the kopjes or mountains which shut them in, and *make* them neks. Those of the present example are sufficiently extraordinary. Viewed hastily from our artillery position, the general impression would have been of a tall and perfect isosceles triangle of a kopje on the right, apparently isolated, outlined against an indefinite mass of cliff slightly higher than itself. On the left a perpendicular wooded bluff, with two more tiny isosceles triangular kopjes in front of it, nestling, so to speak, against the lower part of its dark-green bosom. A pretty correct impression on the whole, with certain important omissions necessary to be filled in before the difficulties of the assault can be understood. To begin with, a glance through a field-glass from a position slightly to the left of the guns betrays the fact that the tall kopje on the right is not isolated at all, but connected with the cliff behind by a razor-backed saddle with steep sides. Herein lies its danger to us: it has a line of retreat, and is therefore certain to be strongly held. Again, the cliff-mass behind loses not a tittle of its vagueness on careful inspection, and, with the aid of one of the new extra-special, double-million, armour-piercing field-glasses, resolves itself into numerous alarmingly well-defined salients and buttresses, all covered with huge boulders—better cover by far than unintrenched Boers have any right to expect. The left of the mass—that is to say, the side abutting on the nek itself—is precipitous, and therefore unassailable by any one from the road below. Carrying the eye over the width of the nek to the wooded bluff to its left, things here, too, are not quite what they seemed to be at first. The bluff is also precipitous on its inner or nek side, the beetling crest actually overhanging the base in parts. The tiny kopjes, too, at its base are not tiny at all, but of respectable tonnage; nor do they "nestle" in any peaceful fashion against the breast of their great green mother behind, but are separated from her by a deep hollow with unlimited potentialities of

Dutchmen in its depths. Such is the scenery which backs the great grassy stage in front of all, which, at the place where the footlights would come, is divided from the auditorium, the gun-plateau, by a wide, deep, but dry watercourse, from us down to which, and from which up to the crest of the nek (oh, the gymnastics of the English language!) and the vanishing point of the road, the smooth veldt runs in one gentle uniform slope, called by scientific soldiers "glacis," but by warriors who have to make their difficult way over it under fire, by a far less refined and more English term.

Undoubtedly a strong position, possibly a murderous one, if strongly held against a frontal attack: and it is difficult to see how Moltke himself could devise a "way round" when the ground on either flank, so far from becoming more practicable, only gets, if anything, "more so" than the coveted nek itself.

The luncheon interval is brief; for the Royal Artillery it is no interval at all, but a period of rumbling and rolling into line on either side of the naval guns, howitzers on the left under Major Gordon, 7th and 64th field-batteries under Major Paget on the right of the howitzers: all old campaigners, these gunners, with hardly a wheel of their playthings not pock-marked with bullets or shrapnel from the terrible contests in the dark dawn of the war. A pom-pom, one of two owned by us, on the left of the howitzers: on the extreme right a battery of Royal Horse Artillery, thrown back at right angles, facing the mountains which curve around our right flank. This battery was first engaged, opening with shrapnel about 1 P.M. on a rift in the hills in front of them, from which several Boers were seen to leave hurriedly. But Boers can fire shrapnel too! Whiz—bang! "What is that?" ask the new chums—a small minority in this army of veterans. "High-velocity gun," laconically reply the seasoned majority. So it is, fired from Heaven knows where, but very obviously slating the gallant horse artillerymen. Half-a-dozen shells in quick succession follow the first, all there or thereabouts. Then a roar from our main artillery position. A 4·7 gun has spoken, and let no other dog bark when that mighty voice is heard! Another roar, and another, then a tornado of them; the sailors have joined battle. Farther on the left the "ough," "ough" of the field-guns breaks upon the ear, distinctly heard amidst the deep booming of the navals, by reason of the different key in which their song is pitched. Farther still the quaint cough of the howitzers just beginning their deadly underhand bowling at the silent and invisible batsmen ahead. What are they all firing at?

From my position on the left of the whole line of guns —to all of which I was blandly informed by a staff officer that I was to consider myself and company as escort —the effect of every shell, lyddite, shrapnel, and howitzer, was plainly visible. And, as

the usually unimpressionable Baron Reuter truly remarks, "a magnificent sight" it was! The main column of fire was at first directed on to the conical kopje to the right of the nek, and what hell it must have been to the Boers crouching on it! Great columns of brown earth, huge fragments of stone showing up, jagged and black even at this distance; square yards of hillside over which the shrapnel bullets whizzed like a mighty besom, sweeping sand and shell in a dusty heap before them,—how could that kopje show plainer the tortures it was enduring? But still the high-velocity demon was spitting his 3-inch "rushers" on to the plateau from his unseen lair, making uncommonly good practice too, and causing one to reflect with impatience on the aphorism—thoroughly disbelieved at the time—laid down by an instructor of Sandhurst days,—that a gun well served and well hidden has nothing to fear from superior metal groping for it in the open. At last, too, is heard what every one has been unconsciously listening for — the savage thumping from a pom-pom from behind the shell-stricken kopje. Piff, piff, piff, skip the little projectiles amongst the naval guns. The rascal is bearding the very lion himself, and with effect! For a time it was uncommonly uncomfortable on the big-gun deck. "What a lark," quoth the bold mariners, "if we have to shift for a 1-inch spitfire!" But if Boers can fire shrapnel, Britons can pom-pom with the best, and it was not long before Captain Harvest was thumping away, too, from his position on the left, cheerfully sprinkling the nek and its belongings with spurts of dust and smoke for lack of anything more definite to aim at.

Meanwhile, behind this appalling noise and pother, the infantry were unconcernedly ranging themselves in battle array: Dorsets and Middlesex (famous old corps, with famous old *sobriquets*, "Green Linnets" and "Die-Hards," won in opposite corners of the globe) in the front line of the 10th brigade; East Surreys and Queen's (*not* "West Surreys," as ignorant reporters love to call them) leading the 2nd brigade, backed by the West Yorks and Devons, which latter regiment was subsequently diverted from a direct advance for another purpose, to be described later. About 2 P.M. the advance commenced, heralded by a fresh, and if possible more tremendous, blast from the artillery, whose thundering had diminished for a space, and also by the appearance of two more pom-poms in the enemy's *répertoire*, whose punching was again directed chiefly at our centre, the naval artillery position, once or twice, indeed, landing perilously near the "mark" in the shape of General Buller and his staff, who had ridden up close behind the leading lines of infantry. The early portion of the attack was without incident. The

long wavy streaks of men—broken here and there to avoid bad ground, or where a soldier slower of foot than his fellows had failed to keep the alignment—swept steadily forward, topped the plateau, rolled past the guns, and had reached the dry spruit at its base before the first rifle-shot snapped from the heights above. It came from the conical kopje on the right, and was fired at the Dorsets, who were heading straight for the hill, with the Middlesex trending round to envelop the right side of the now battered cone. It was immediately followed by that continuous roar of musketry which the Natal army knows so well. There is nothing to which one can compare the sound of sustained Boer rifle-fire. A policeman's rattle, or a boy drawing his stick along the area railings of an invalid's house, will, no doubt, remind us in the future of Mausers in action, but it will be but a faint reminiscence, and will be required to be multiplied and hurried up, and generally intensified beyond the power of urchin or policeman, before it can claim to be in the least a phonographic copy of that querulous and ominous crackling. Dorsets and Middlesex are catching it hot, not only from their front, but also from the bluff on the left of the nek, which in this early stage of the fight is rather unfairly neglecting its properly appointed target, the Queen's and Surreys, who press forward rapidly as though impatient to be dealt out their share of the punishment. They had not long to wait, and were soon receiving "a little bit off the top" of the heights on both sides. But the conical kopje is obviously the key of the position, and naturally the Boers, who have as keen an eye for a topographical "key" as any tactical examination board, pound their heaviest fire upon the troops assaulting it.

Situation at 3 P. M., both flanks of the attack well committed, bluffing their several ways uphill against a rapid and continuous fall of bullets. Strength of hostile riflemen guessed by the volume of fire at about 3000 men. Their artillery strength now known to be one 3-inch high-velocity gun (12-pounder) and three pom-poms, all of whose positions were so far uncertain. Not such a great disparity in chances as the figures would lead a theorist to suppose. Four hidden guns, served by accurate and plucky gunners, and 3000 absolutely invisible and brave riflemen, perched on precipitous and boulder-strewn heights, can do a good deal of damage to an enemy advancing over ground as green and bare as a billiard-table, and it is more than possible that the stout Zoutpansbergers and other occupiers of cliff and kopje had greater hopes of doing damage than of ultimate victory. Yet there was much to gain from victory. A check to the Rooineks at Almond's Nek would confirm the big commandos in their position between Majuba

and Pongwana, and would furthermore give time for reinforcements to reach the threatened right. A little digging, another gun or two, 2000 more Mausers, would make Almond's Nek a very difficult nut to crack indeed, and might even send the English back to the by no means secure heights of Botha's Pass, to ruminate on another line of advance. But there had been no time for digging; the bulk of the guns and Mausers were still facing the 4th brigade on the Ingogo, and the bright sun of this day was a sun of Austerlitz to these uncouth kinsmen of the fighting men who had melted away before Napoleon a hundred years before.

About this time two discoveries were made — one, a menace to ourselves; the other, a disaster to the enemy. The first was, that there was something very much more than a commando hanging about Brocklehurst's left flank, though the full gravity of the situation on that side was not, I believe, known at the time. Later information shows that the redoubtable De Wet himself was watching the battle from a no greater distance than two miles outside the outermost cavalry flankers. At any rate, this left flank, open as it was to an attack which would have been disastrous to our artillery position on the plateau, required watching, and half the Devon regiment, with a pom-pom, was despatched to occupy a dangerous ridge about 2000 yards away.

The second discovery was made by a 15-pounder field-gun, which in the course of a so to speak "conchological" tour of the enemy's position burst a shrapnel exactly over the centre of the two deceptive little kopjes in front of the wooded cliff on the left, and, incidentally, exactly upon the high-velocity gun ensconced behind them! A great shot, the result of which apparently escaped the notice of even the artillerymen themselves, though I saw it most distinctly. That 3-inch gun fired no more from this place. Indeed its only further contributions to the engagement were two futile shots, sent from an invisible position a long way back about an hour later, when the nek was practically in our hands. After this the howitzers began to turn their attention to these kopjes, and then the terrible power of their high-angle fire became apparent. Between the kopjes and the bluff ran a deep and narrow gorge from which an annoying rifle fire proceeded even after the gun had been withdrawn. Time after time the lyddite shells, snorting slowly through the air like a goods train up a gradient, dropped plumb into this huge natural shelter trench, with a reverberating roar that was awful to hear even from the howitzer position itself. There is no more accurate weapon than a howitzer, in capable hands, at 2500 yards, and no howitzers in the world could be better served than those which coughed and thundered at the unhappy Dutchmen on Al-

mond's Nek. Meanwhile, gallant deeds were in progress on the right flank. Nothing more dashing than the rush of the Dorsets upon the conical hill in front of them has been witnessed in this campaign. "They had been unlucky up to this," wrote the old warrior who watched them, "but have showed themselves as good as any of the others." No scant praise from one who has followed the army of Natal from its first footsteps on the bloody path of war; how much more prized from the silent man who has led them along it, blaming seldom, praising not often, even where praise has been earned, but somehow letting every private soldier in his command know how truly he gauged and appreciated their efforts, how the very soul and spirit of their fighting had touched his own fighting soul!

Fighting is a great leveller, especially unsuccessful fighting. Else why should Thomas Atkins have looked up so stealthily under his brows into the set face of his general as he made his painful way back from certain hills and ridges of cursed memory? Usually generals are negligible quantities in the soldier's philosophy, but common purpose checked and rebuffed, common dangers, common heroism, can wipe out whole furlongs of the Army List, until the Alpha and Omega thereof are as close together as they are separated in the piping times of peace and prosperity.

And now the Dorsets were earning praise. How they swarmed up that triangular kopje, with every Mauser pumping lead at them in front, and every dry throat behind them inaudibly shouting "Well done!" The Middlesex, too, were as busy and as brave farther around the right. At 3 P.M. the kopje was ours, and in an incredibly short time bayonets were seen wavering upon the razor-backed ridge behind it. A sudden and dreadful doubt sends a hot wave over the spectator's body, when shells are seen bursting so close above the tiny figures that they actually duck and bob as if to avoid them. Have the gunners 2000 yards away seen them? But it is all right, though no doubt the gallant stormers think that their naval friends are cutting it a bit fine. Whatever they think, it does not appear to paralyse action, for on they go for the cliff behind, moving the faster as the Mauser fire dwindles and dies before them. The Boers are flying, the terrible splashing of Major Paget's shrapnel lending wings to the feet of those whom it does not dash lifeless to the ground. The howitzers cease firing. The heavy naval ordnance begin to cock their long snouts higher and higher into the air, as they "chance it" over the reverse slope of the enemy's left position. The hitherto impartial pom-pom begins to be fastidious, and only turns on its terrifying little hose when agitated dots in the distance show themselves to be indubitably Boers. Even the shrapnel ceases after a time,

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"JULIA HOOD."

Could anything be more stirring? I was at last to teach a school and be paid for it. The very first thing I'd buy would be—well, I would decide later; *now* my business clearly was to make myself look older. In vain I tried. My face and form were hopelessly childish. At last I presented myself before Julia Hood.

"Will I do?" I asked.

"Oh!" she screamed, as she danced about the room in delight at my "get up."

I was furious, and loftily asked the cause of her amusement.

"Oh, nothing," she said. "But *don't*, I beseech you, blush that way before Mr Black. He's the county superintendent, and we've got to see him and try to get the position for you. You see he offered it to me, but I am so much older than you, and then I've had some experience in teaching; so perhaps he will not take you."

At this possibility my courage returned. "He *must*," I

except on the far-away right, where the horse-artillery are still shelling away at the mountains. The heights are ours, the seizure of the left following as a natural corollary to success on the right; and the rows of trenches and other terrors on Laing's Nek are worth no more than a box of pins.

It is easy to wax sentimental over the silence that follows a battle. It has been done before: alas! unless human nature alters very much, it will be done again. As my men and I marched wearily down into the mist that rose from the spruit-bed, following the guns which had been our charge all day, to bed in the darkening valley, I wondered if the slain who lay hidden amongst the boulders were raising their pale faces a little to listen, like the corpses in Fritel's dreadful picture.[1]

But after all, the day ended, as it had begun, in cheerfulness. Sidelong glances at the tops of kopjes in the gloom, and dismal reflections upon their ghastly occupants, soon became out of place by a bivouac fire, and in the presence of a good dinner, for which relief I here register much and fervent thanks to the gallant and hospitable pom-pom officers who afforded it.

LINESMAN.

[1] The Conquerors.

HOW AN ENGLISH GIRL TAUGHT A PENNSYLVANIA COUNTRY SCHOOL.

I WAS a very young and timid girl belonging to one of those English families who, having seen better days, come to America to retrieve a shattered fortune, and too often find themselves worse off than when they were in England.

This being the case, and I having lately graduated from the Girls' High School of G——, Pennsylvania, it eventually fell to my lot to earn my living by teaching.

I knew nothing whatever about teaching except that it seemed a fine thing to be able to keep a book open to refresh one's memory while the pupil does all the work; so the prospect of teaching did not dishearten me. That was the occupation followed by every girl graduated from the High School of G——, irrespective of her bent or qualifications, provided she could obtain an appointment in one of the city or county public schools (*free* schools). This was what troubled me—how to get a position.

I had graduated in June, and it was now March; but although I had left no stone unturned, my services as a teacher did not seem to be in demand.

One morning—when I least expected it—a note from a classmate was handed to me marked on the envelope "in haste," and ran as follows:—

"DEAR ETHEL,—I have been offered a position at Kutztown. It's called 'Liberty School,' far out in the country; but, as you know, I am already 'placed,' so you may have it. Let down the hem of your dress (you look such an infant), fix your hair up, and come to see me at once. —Yours in haste,

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At this possibility my courage returned. "He *must*," I

said. "Come along." And away we went.

We were shown into a large cheerless room, and told by the servant to "wait on him 'til he gets done eatin'."

It took him just long enough to "get done eatin'" to work me up again to perfect limpness, and when he did appear I was almost too weak to rise.

Julia looked at me and said, "Mr Black, I have come to tell you that I am already teaching, and so cannot take the position you offered me, but I have brought Miss Ethel Greaves. *She* will take it."

She sat down and looked towards me, intimating that I must now help myself. So I braced myself for the ordeal.

Mr Black turned his grave gaze upon me so long and earnestly that his face became a sort of blur to me. *What* was he looking at, and what would he decide? This was torture.

At last he said, "Have you ever taught before, Miss — Greaves? We employ none but experienced teachers at Liberty School," he continued.

"I have taught in Sunday-school," said I. Mr Black's hand passed slowly over his mouth.

"Do you think you could do it?" he said.

"I *know* I could," said I. "Besides, I *must* have a position."

"Oh, you *must?* Well, I will tell you something about the school, and then perhaps you will be willing to take some advice I am going to give you. The boys you will have to teach at that school are a very rough set; indeed the present teacher has resigned because she cannot manage them, and I should think she is twice your age. I see that you are not convinced," he added, for I was having my own opinion of one of her age who couldn't manage a rough set of boys, and showed it in my face, "so you may as well know the whole truth, which is just this: those boys literally turned her out of the school, carried her out, and locked the door, yesterday. My advice to you, therefore, is that you give up all thoughts of teaching until you are a little older, or at least that you begin upon something easier."

"They would not carry *me* out," I said.

Mr Black sat thinking for some time.

"Excuse me," he said at last, and left the room.

I dared not look at Julia, but I was just cautiously peeping in a mirror that hung on the wall before me to see about how old I must appear to him, and therefore what were my chances of success, when he came back.

"You may try the thing, Miss Greaves. It's only for six weeks, and I wish you success. You have pluck at least," he added grimly. "Take the nine o'clock train to-morrow morning for Kutztown, and give this note to Amos Harding—he is the principal director of the school. He will do whatever is necessary for you." And with no further preparation I was dismissed.

Great was the excitement when I got home and an-

nounced that I was to go to Kutztown the next morning.

It seemed to my parents a terrible risk to send me off for the first time alone to an entirely unknown place, and with such vague instructions; and I am afraid they never would have let me go had I not (I grieve to say) made home almost "untenable" for the last six months by my repinings for a position.

Therefore they reluctantly consented to let me try it. My heart dreaded the first venture, but I had determined to teach, and to show my family that I could do something, for I had overheard the maid say, "So she's got a job. Well, the blind goose gets the grain of corn *sometimes*."

I had a secret misgiving that my family shared these sentiments, and that I seemed the "blind goose" to them also. Enough. I would prove my power.

With inward misgiving and much outward courage I boarded the train. I think we stopped at eight or nine stations, at each of which I inquired anxiously if we were at Kutztown.

"Kutztown," called the conductor, and I at once got out, fearing I might be taken beyond the scene of action.

I entered a tiny stuffy room with benches around the walls, a great stove in the middle, surrounded by men the like of whom I had never seen before. They were farmers, and stared at me, not boldly, but with the most open curiosity.

I approached one and asked if he could tell me where Mr Amos Harding was to be found.

"Amos?" he said. "That's him yonder," pointing with his thumb to a thin anxious-looking being who, I noticed, wore high india-rubber boots, a mouse-coloured shirt, no coat, and a slouch hat.

"Did you say that is Mr Harding, the school director, I am looking for?"

"That's your man," said he.

"Say, Amos, here's a girl wants you."

"Hold on a bit, Martin: I'll be there then," said he who I was forced to believe was the educator I sought. And he came. I felt degraded because he did not raise his hat, but that was only the first day of my venture.

"Well," said he, "you've got the better of me." And I handed him the superintendent's letter.

"He says you're to be the noo teacher. Come over to my place and we can fix this thing up." So I followed him. He lived only a few steps from the station, in a pretty red brick house. I remember noticing that the shutters of every window were shut except those which belonged to the kitchen. It astonished me at the time; but I afterwards learned that the country-folks live almost entirely in their kitchens, the parlour seldom being opened except for very important visitors or when the daughter of the house "keeps comp'ny."

"Now," said he, facing me, "Mr Black wants I shall put you in at Liberty, and I'm quite willin' you should have

it; but it's just this way. I'm runnin' for clerk of the Orphans' Court in G——. Now, *if* you'll get your pap or any of your friends to wote for me, why, then, I'll put you through."

"I cannot promise that," I said. "How do I know he will do it?"

"Well, you can anyhow get me one wote. I ain't givin' this job for nothin'."

I thought. The greed of office was upon me, and I promised to use my influence with my father to control his "wote."

"All right; here's the election ticket. Amos Harding, my name. It says" (tracing the words with his finger), "'Wote for Amos Harding and the straight Republican ticket.'"

I took the ticket with a heavy heart. I felt I was holding out hopes to this man which he would scarcely realise.

"Now, let's see. To-day's Saturday; Monday you commence."

"Then I am to have the position?"

"Yes. It'll be all right about the school, I guess. The other directors does about what I say; but I'm just studyin' where you'll get a boardin' place. The nearest farm to Liberty's more'n two mile. Hold on. There's Hogentogler's; his place is a good two mile this side of Liberty, and I doubt if he'd take you. He boarded the last teacher, and that give him the jumps. Why, she kep' comp'ny every night in the week. He says he'll have no more of them shines. Lizzie," he suddenly called, "would Krauskops' mebbe take her?"

I turned with a start in time to see a young woman surrounded by children standing perfectly silent at the door.

"No," she said firmly. "Mary's gettin' comp'ny all this month. You know she said at the Creamery the folks were comin'. There's Homshers, though. I think Abannah would board her, but I don't know how it would be about mister; he don't like strangers."

"Could I board with you?" I faltered, my heart sinking at the prospect, and yet board I must somewhere.

"Laws, no!" said Amos. "The school's six mile from here, easy."

"Yes, easy," repeated his wife.

"Well, I'll tell you what. John can hitch up and take you out that way a piece, and you can try your luck. If you get a place to board, you can begin to teach Monday; but if not, why, then, John can just haul you back in time for the five o'clock train, and you can go home, and no harm done."

"And who will teach the school?" said I.

"Pap'll find somebody. I guess he'd sooner have a man anyway, because *you* can't wote for him."

So John "hitched up," and I got into the buggy beside this same John, and here began the second stage of my adventure.

"Gee up," said John. And then he told me that he must be back at the station in time for the five o'clock train; so if I had not succeeded in finding a rest by that time he would have to take me back.

It was snowing drearily, but I would not be discouraged. I plied him with questions about the farms, the people, the country, and the horse, but I could see he was not interested, and by the nervous way he consulted his watch every few minutes it was quite clear to me that his own business and not mine worried him. At last he turned into a lane which led up to a grey stone farmhouse. Jumping from the buggy, he opened the gate and walked up to the house, leaving the horse to take me there.

A very tidy-looking woman in a sun-bonnet and gingham apron was sweeping the porch. She turned her apron into a sort of belt, and, broom in hand, came to the side of the buggy. John strolled off to the barn, calling out, "Well, Mrs Hogentogler, I'll go and talk to the men awhile."

The horse evidently meant to go with him, for I could not make it stop though I tugged hard at the reins with my benumbed hands. Mrs Hogentogler said "Wo, there, Bill," taking the bridle.

"I am the new teacher," I said; "will you let me board with you?"

"I'm sorry, but Hogentogler he won't hear of it. We took the teacher to board last year and he's all out of heart with teachers; he says he won't board no more of them, and I don't blame him. He says, 'some person else can take the next.' It's the keepin' comp'ny he don't like, you see. Why, most all the young men in Kutztown set up with her."

I sneered. This was too unjust.

"I should have none of them coming to see me, if that's what you mean," I said.

"Oh yes, you would," she said, glancing up at me. "That is, if you made yourself common."

I afterwards learned that "to make oneself common" meant not being proud. For in Pennsylvania country districts the American boast of equality is literally lived up to, and nothing is more bitterly resented than pride which will not associate with any and every one.

I was about to press the point further when John came up, watch in hand, and said we must go to the next farm, for the "men" had told him my fate.

"Well, good-bye to you," said Mrs Hogentogler looking very uncomfortable as we drove off.

The next place we tried was Krauskops'. They were gettin' comp'ny as Mrs Harding had said, so had no room. And then we came to a farm owned by one Silas Bard, and there I met with no friendly reception. John told me that a daughter of that house named Mary had applied for the position at Liberty School, but Silas her father being a New Mennonite,

and therefore having no vote (to help Amos Harding), she had lost, and had determined to make the life of the successful candidate miserable. John said—

"Now, I'll take you to Manasseh Homsher's, and that's my last."

My cup of misery was full. I felt as though I had been years away from home. It was late in the afternoon, and there seemed now nothing but the inglorious prospect of going home.

We had now come to the lane that led to my last hope. John drove along at a most uncompromising pace. A boy of about twelve years opened the gate, and we stopped before the long porch. No need to knock, for at the first sound of wheels the door opened, and there stood before us an elderly woman all dressed in grey. She wore a spotless white apron. Her face was very calm and kindly—one to inspire confidence in a poor wanderer like me.

"This is Abannah Homsher," said John, "and I've only five minutes to spare. So please hurry up."

Here at last was a type I understood. She seemed to have gentle blood in her veins, and looked so true and kind that I resolved to lay siege in earnest.

I told my errand hurriedly. When I had finished she shook her head.

"I'd take thee in a minute," she said, "but Manasseh (my husband) has a perfect horror of strangers: he would never consent, my dear."

"Don't *ask* him," I pleaded.

She smiled. "I should have to ask him; besides"—she hesitated—"we have two old aunties of his boarding with us, and they would think as he does. I'm *too* sorry to refuse thee, child," she said, looking at me over her spectacles.

"Mrs Homsher," I said, desperately, "I'm dreadfully cold and tired, and if I'm disappointed as well I shall be ill. Please tell the man to go, and ask Mr Homsher afterwards."

"Well, wait a minute. Let me go at least and tell Manasseh what I am going to do."

"No," I almost screamed, as she moved towards the barn; "please take me in on your own responsibility."

At this point John came up, said he must "go sure now," and asked how I had "made out."

"Come in," said Mrs Homsher, quietly. "John, thee need not wait." And I went in: but now that I had gained my point, for once inside the house, I felt like an intruder indeed. This consciousness made me silent and stiff just at the time when Mrs Homsher was beginning to "warm to me." In vain I tried to comfort myself by reflecting that I should earn the money and pay for my board; there was no comfort to be had from that source.

She gave me a chair before a large stove with a great deal of nickel ornamentation about it. A bright fire was burning, and altogether the room looked inviting after my weary travels.

It was a long low room. At one end was a sort of bench

with a railing and cylindrical cushions of chintz at each end: this was the sofa. At the other end was a large round table, with a lamp in the middle. It was covered with books, magazines, writing materials, and I must not forget to mention the wire-basket filled with apples that is never absent from the tables of these Pennsylvania country homes. There was a long low window looking out upon the lane through which we had driven. This was the "living-room," for the Homshers — thanks to Abannah's refining influence—did not use their kitchen exclusively.

Having settled me before the fire, Mrs Homsher sat down and quietly took up her interrupted sewing. I felt uncomfortable, for I could see she was disturbed over what she had just done. So I dared not say a word, but sat, wet and miserable, looking into the fire and thinking of home. Whenever I raised my eyes to steal a look at her, I found her beautiful earnest brown eyes fixed upon me, and she afterwards told me that my English accent and proud bearing, when my point was gained, made her doubt the wisdom of sheltering me.

Presently she put down her work, saying, "Has thee had anything to eat?"

"No; but I'll not have anything, thank you."

"Yes, but thee must have a piece. Thee must excuse me, I forgot to ask thee before. Just go out to Maggie, and she'll get thee a bite before supper."

I did not want a "bite," but her silence was so oppressive that I decided to try "Maggie," and following her directions I found myself in a basement kitchen.

It was a large room, with bare floor and bare rafters. There were shelves of all sizes here and there upon the walls; on one I noticed a number of candlesticks, on another lamps, on another bags of hops, grain, and seeds, and still another held a violin. A great pine-wood table ran nearly the whole length of the room, with a backless bench on each side. I also saw a huge brick oven in the wall. The door leading into the garden was open, and there were flat stones sunk into the earth making a path leading from the kitchen to the "spring-house" (where milk and butter are kept, cooled by the spring over which it is built). I noticed several chickens walking in and out of the door, and one was on the window-sill pecking at some ears of corn.

The room was bitterly cold, for there was no fire, and standing before the "range" and blacking it was a young girl with snapping black eyes.

She was very pretty, and had dimples that made her fascinating when she smiled as she looked up and caught sight of me standing in the doorway.

"Come right in," she said cordially. "You're the noo teacher, ain't you? Oh, John Harding told me," she said, answering my unformed question. "He told mister too," she added, laughing. "And maybe he ain't furious. You know he don't like strangers. I bet

missus won't hear the last of *this*. He's that cont*rairy* he'd make me crazy. But he don't bother *me* any; he knows I'd give him a mouthful. So," she added kindly, "you mustn't mind if him and aunties are ugly to you."

Then she saw how wet and cold I was, and took a knitted shawl from a hook on the wall (*other* hooks held hams, sides of bacon, and herbs of all sorts) and put it over my shoulders, then placed upon the table a glass of milk and a huge triangle of cold apple-pie.

She was so kind that I tried to eat, but failed. I did not trust myself to speak for fear of crying, but just managed to say, "I wonder if I could write a letter; I should like to post one to-night. Where is the post-office?"

"Right here," she said, pointing with the blacklead brush to the stairs. "At the top of the stairs where missus keeps her preserves," she explained.

"The post-office?" I said, bewildered.

"Yes, Mrs Homsher is the post-mistress, and you mail your letters here. Now come upstairs and I'll show you where you can write."

I followed her into the "living-room," where Abannah still sat sewing.

"Teacher wants to write a letter," said Maggie.

"Thee can sit at this table and write thy letter." And Abannah cleared a place and put pen and ink ready for me, and I wrote a letter.

It was more like a story. I described everything, including the two inmates I had seen, and had nothing but good to say of them. I remember their peculiarities, and I wrote quite fully of them all. I also indulged in the most gloomy surmises as to that dreadful "mister" who "hated strangers." I was just in the midst of it, when Maggie put her head in at the door and said, "Will you come in to supper, missus? Mister and aunties are in already."

Mrs Homsher looked grim as she rose, saying, "Thee can finish thy letter after supper. Thee seems to have a deal to say," as she glanced at the thick pile of sheets. Instinctively my hand sought my precious letter. Suppose the temptation to see what I had written should prove too strong, and they should read my letter? It would be so intensely interesting to them that I could almost have excused them. *Could* I, without offence, cover with blank sheets, or must I leave it? While I hesitated, Mrs Homsher, who read my thoughts, said coldly—

"Thee need not be afraid, we shall not read thy letter."

I said nothing. She then led the way into the kitchen. A different room it seemed now, with a bright fire, and the family seated at table.

Mrs Homsher said, "Miss Greaves, will thee sit next to Elwood?" My black-eyed friend of the afternoon was seated in a rocking-chair at a little distance from the table in the capacity of waitress, rocking steadily, and sniffing in a disdainful fashion towards mister.

Mister. The man who hated strangers.

Sliding one of the long benches placed on each side of the table past what seemed to me a dozen or more people who leaned back against the wall to make way, I took my place between Mrs Homsher and her little son Elwood, who had opened the gate for John in the afternoon, and who now kicked his father under the table by way of calling attention to me.

I learned afterwards that he and the "aunties" were in league with the father against the mother. She was considered proud and ambitious.

"Manasseh," said Mrs Homsher bravely, "this is the new teacher. I hope thee'll make her welcome."

Manasseh was a man of about forty-five, rather tall, thin, and stooping, having allowed his form to become what Maggie called "fersuttled," or "settled down." His hair was no colour in particular, and hung in long moist threads that crowned the most obstinate-looking head I have ever seen. There he sat, cleansing every vestige of food from his plate with a bit of bread. But though prepared to acknowledge his greeting, he might have been stone for all the impression his wife's speech made upon him.

"Manasseh," she said, and waited a moment, "won't thee speak to teacher? She's away from her home for the first time, and we musn't let her get home-sick."

No response, but still the same careful, slow, dogged attention to the business in hand, giving a polish to his plate which his manners lacked.

At each side of Mr Homsher sat an old lady, and these were the aunties who "would think as he did." "Mister's folks." Their attitudes clearly said, "*We* are not responsible for bringing her." And I could see they were thoroughly enjoying poor Mrs Homsher's embarrassment. *This* and the allusion to my home were too much, and I felt the tears rising: indeed one great drop came up to my eyelid, and I balanced it there to the end of the meal.

I caught Mrs Homsher looking at me anxiously, fearing, perhaps, that after all her confidence might turn out to be misplaced.

This dreadful meal over, each one got up and shuffled off except Abannah, who lingered rather sadly over her tea.

"Thee sit still and have another cup with me," she said coaxingly. But I did not dare to answer, so merely shook my head, looking all the gratitude I felt, and was hurrying back to my letter when each of the "aunties" took her cup and saucer and washed them, and the one whom they called "Aunt Ruth" said to Abannah, "Maybe thee's not too much taken up with thy stranger to see after Manasseh's foot. Thee knows he hurt it; but, then, strangers come first." And with this taunt both aunts left the room. They were twins, and must have been eighty years old. I remember wonder-

ing how at that great age they were not afraid to be so wicked.

"Any kind of strangers 'ud be better than yous," snapped Maggie from her rocking-chair. "I wish they'd hurt their own feet, and their big mouths too."

"Maggie," in a mild voice from Abannah, "thee mustn't talk like that: remember aunties are very old."

"Not *near* old enough to soot me nor you neither, missus, if you'd only say it."

By that time I had steadied my voice enough to say, "I should like to go to bed, Mrs Homsher. I can finish my letter in my room."

"Thee shall go, child," she said, taking down a candle from the shelf and lighting it, and took me to a very pretty little bedroom and left me. There was a huge feather bed and pillows, and in these I buried my face and my sorrows and wept. I cried until I reached the stage when one finds it is no use, and there are no tears left. Like Pharaoh's butler, I forgot to mention my benefactor, Amos Harding; but suddenly "remembering my sin," I added a postscript to my letter, not forgetting to enclose the "straight Republican ticket," to enable my father to "wote" intelligently. This done, I went to bed and to sleep.

It was very late on Sunday morning when I awoke, hearing the voice of mister—well known, because I had dreamt of it all night.

"Frankie," I heard him say, "thee's a blame sight lazier than thy brother, and the most onreliablest animal that ever I hearn tell of."

Enough. I am not going downstairs. I shall stay in my room, and perhaps by to-morrow be in a fit condition to teach. For the strange people had put the school entirely out of my thoughts.

That Sunday was one of the most miserable I have ever spent. I touched no food, and had intervals of violent crying, and trying to make a programme for my first day's teaching.

"What am I to teach?" I asked myself again and again. "And how begin?" "What shall I say to them first?" "And suppose those 'rough boys' should try to put me out," and a hundred other tormenting doubts and fears beset me.

Late in the evening there was a gentle rap at the door. Maggie came in. She came straight up to the bed where I lay and gathered me in her arms and kissed me.

"Don't cry," she said. "Me and my brothers are orphans. You might cry then. You haven't saw my brothers yet, have you?—Frank and Eddie. Missus took us to raise six year ago. We was at an orphanage in G——, and missus come there to get a girl, and picked on me. But I wouldn't go without Eddie and Frank, so she said she'd take the lot. She said mister could use two boys on the farm, and that's how we come here; and if it wouldn't be for missus we would have gone some place else long ago. I bet there's a many a time she wishes *she*

didn't have to stay with mister and them two old copy cats. They make me that mad I could eat them. But you needn't to care. He'll come round after a bit if you make yourself common; and if *he* likes you, aunties will too. Now I must go, and you'd better go to bed because we eat at six to-morrow morning." And so she left me. Soothed by her kindness, I soon fell asleep.

At six o'clock the next morning I presented myself at the breakfast-table. At last I had myself well in hand, and felt ready for the task before me, and was going to take my place at the table when the garden door opened and there came into the room a young man with the roundest, reddest, sunniest of faces, very round astonished blue eyes, and a bristling moustache. He looked the very personification of good nature, his great thick shoulders shaking with laughter.

He was whistling and dancing into the room, but stopped as if shot upon seeing me. He blushed so painfully that I took a fancy to him then and there, feeling we were victims of the same unfortunate habit. Maggie laughed aloud.

"Come in, Eddie," she said, "it's only teacher." Then turning to me—

"This is my brother: he will be one of your pupils."

And this she said all unconscious of the terror her words had aroused.

"That's Frankie,—he's my brother too; but you won't think him near such a good pupil."

There stood behind Eddie a man of about twenty-two or twenty-three, with a very fully developed moustache, and not nearly so open a face. He stood giggling and playing with the back of his collar. It was Eddie who first noticed the effect of all this upon me, for I stood, as it were, gasping for air, and he blurted out, "We won't give you no trouble, teacher, me and Frankie."

"Mister" came in to breakfast just in time to hear Eddie's last speech, and said, "Frankie there's as durn skittish as he can stick his hide full: if teacher can lick some of *that* out of him, she's got my thanks."

This was frightful language for me, who only a few days ago had been told to "run away, dear," when the very mildest form of slang was used in my presence. Thus had I been guarded and kept a mere child, and I suddenly found myself forced to "make myself common" in order to conciliate this man, who, I decided, judged by my standards, must be of the blackest.

All this should have made one very miserable had not all feeling been deadened by the overwhelming shock. "This will be one of your pupils." How could I teach a man with a beard? What must I call him? Dared I correct him if he were wrong? Oh, the battle of life had begun in real earnest, and I felt helpless. At this point Mrs Homsher came in.

"Does thee know thee's expected to make a fire in the

school-stove, and thee'll mebbe have to clean the room before the children get there?"

"Make a fire! and clean the room! And this in the presence of my pupils. I wondered if the children she spoke of were all men. I instinctively turned towards those two grinning youths.

"Is thee too proud?" said Abannah gravely.

"No," I said stoutly, and determined to take whatever came, and show myself mistress of the situation.

I am sure I showed my resolve in my face, for I heard Maggie say with a snap, "That's the stuff."

Breakfast being over, and armed with a lead pencil and some paper, I was just setting out when Mrs Homsher stopped me, saying, "Well, thee'll want a bite at noon. Maggie, has thee put up the lunch yet?"

"Why, I'm just studyin' what for lunch to put up."

"Oh, a piece of that snitz pie and a couple dough-nuts." Good gracious! thought I, what am I called upon to eat? But that was a very minor consideration.

"Eddie and Frank will go with thee to show thee the way, and here's the school-key," she said, handing me a key large enough for a jail. So the three of us went forth, Eddie carrying my lunch and Frankie the key.

Eddie, who took his responsibilities seriously, was trying to say something, but what with blushing and coughing it was not forthcoming. At last, "We'd best take the short cut across the fields, ain't?"

"Yes," I said.

"You'll have to climb a couple of fences."

"Yes."

They both helped me over them, tumbling over their own feet in their confusion and embarrassment. We crossed that field and two others.

"That's it," said Eddie, pointing to a tiny frame building, with a very narrow, unpainted door, and a bell in a sort of frame on the roof. And there, standing in groups about this door, were my pupils watching us approach.

The majority were young men and women, but there were a number of girls and boys of all ages, beginning at five. This was evidently more than my escorts had reckoned upon, for they had brought me early so as not to be caught walking with the new teacher.

As we neared the silent but gazing groups they began to tumble in real earnest. They trod on my feet, they bumped my elbow. Frankie, juggling with the key, dropped it while hastening to unlock the door.

I went straight to the stove and began to "make a fire"; but Eddie said, "Me and Frankie'll make a fire, and sweep off the floor. You can just ring the bell a while."

"Thank you, Mr—— ?"

"Just Eddie," he said, in some alarm.

"Where is the bell?" I asked.

"There," he said, pointing up to a rope hanging half-way down

the wall. This I pulled and set the bell ringing.

The boys took their places on one side of the room and the girls on the other. And now with these expectant faces before me — about forty-five, I think—I must open the school, but could not even now decide how to do it. "I will read the Bible to them. That at least will be a safe beginning." I shall never forget my timidity, but once fully launched, it seemed best to go on. My pupils were intensely quiet and devout; but happening to glance up, I saw a shower of notes tossed from one side of the room to the other. The morning flirtations were "on."

I put down the Bible. Frankie had just caught a note and was stuffing his handkerchief into his mouth to suppress his emotion. Fixing a stern look upon him I said, "What have I been reading to you, Frank?" And in the most injured tones he replied, "I didn't just catch what you read." "No, I thought not;" but the next moment the humour of the whole thing quite overcame me, and I laughed until the tears rolled down, and still the school preserved its air of injured innocence. Nobody even smiled.

I took out my paper and pencil and wrote the name, age, and address of each pupil. This steadied me a bit and seemed business-like, and was received so naturally that I felt quite encouraged, and followed it up by trying to find out what subjects were being taught, and other matters that reduced my work to some system.

The older pupils were studying Latin and geometry, and being just fresh from school I found no difficulty in teaching them. They were anxious to learn, and very grateful for the help I gave them; and having fairly begun, the rest of my first day passed pleasantly. I was proud, and wrote another letter home.

On the second day one of the pupils, a certain Harry Smith, was "playing truant." He had been the ringleader in putting the last teacher out; "but then," said one who was his friend and defender, "he was tight that day." I guessed from their comments that "tight" had something to do with strong drink, and my heart sank.

On the third day things were working smoothly, and I was beginning to tolerate the teaching, when suddenly the little window at the end of the room was darkened by a horse's head thrust through into the schoolroom. Its rider was doing his best to attract the attention of a pretty young girl named Abbie Schue. I was mistress of my own school now, for I had discovered from the very first that the pupils, like the elephant, did not know their own power, so I strode down the room, and gravely putting the palms of both hands upon the horse's face, tried to push it out. At this, Smith (for it was he) deliberately rode his horse in at the door, up the middle of the room, down the side, and out. And I, instead of doing something dramatic to show my authority, was lost in admira-

tion for his daring. But finding something was expected of me, I locked the door and never saw Harry Smith again. He was sent to a "normal school" to be trained as a teacher. I was truly sorry, for it seemed to me that a pupil of that dare-devil mould would have made an interesting addition to my already unique school.

At the end of the first week I had a letter from the county superintendent telling me that a teacher's examination would be held on the following Saturday morning in Liberty Schoolhouse, and that I must take the examination in order to be eligible for the position when the school reopened in the autumn. I must hold a certificate of proficiency from the superintendent of the county schools. This news was bad, but when I got to school the next morning I found that three of my pupils were going to be examined also. Yet I felt I could bear even this. So on Saturday morning I took my seat with the rest.

All the directors were there, including Amos Harding, and a number of visitors. A country examination is a sort of public function. There were between forty and fifty candidates, those obtaining a certificate being entitled to positions in the schools, so that my three pupils might run in opposition to me for the position I now held. The applicants ranged from about sixteen to thirty years of age, some looking bright and intelligent, but others hopelessly stupid.

The first subject was arithmetic. A paper containing ten questions was put before each, and forty-five minutes allowed to answer them. It was with dread that I looked them over, but fortunately they were not beyond me. My pencil was hurrying over the paper when I heard a voice beside me whisper, "Say, what's nine twelves?" "One hundred and eight," I said; but the reply was no sooner uttered than I realised I had done wrong. My questioner proved to be a youth of "some twenty," as Maggie would have put it, wearing a flaming red necktie and yellow boots. I was about to investigate further when the superintendent called out, "Mr Cosmos Kutz will please step forward," and he of the necktie and boots swaggered up to the desk.

"What were you saying to Miss Greaves, Cosmos?" he asked sternly.

"Which is Miss Greaves?" said he.

"The young lady next to you."

"Oh, her?" turning his back to Mr Black and winking at me; why, I was just astin' her was she done."

Mr Black looked at me and said, "That will do, Mr Kutz. You may go on with your work." And back he came to his seat, whispering as he passed me, "You're the right sort." But I drew back my skirt in disgust.

Next came a passage from an essay upon English literature to read aloud. This was trying, but I did my best. After reading we were questioned as to the meanings of words, the authors, and works referred to, and so

on. In this I distinguished myself, being familiar with them all. Out of the candidates only half-a-dozen could hold their own in this test. All eyes were turned towards me when called upon to rise and be examined in the geography of the United States.

"Miss Greaves. The capital of the United States, please?"

"Washington."

"He seemed disappointed, possibly because I was English and must not assume superiority to the native county teachers.

"The capital of Mississippi?"

"Don't know."

"Well, then, of Texas? Of Louisiana?"

A long pause—another poser.

"Capital of Illinois?"

I shook my head.

"Capital of Iowa?" said Mr Black, looking quite happy at this little game.

"Des Moines," I said. I remembered that name; it had made an impression on me, being a French one.

This temporary success gave him a fresh impetus, for questions came thick. He took breath and began again.

"Capital of Nevada? No? Of Michigan?"

"Oh, let up on her, you old son of a gun," I heard Cosmos mutter in an aside. The superintendent hurled at poor me all the Eastern and Western States; but though I knew many, so dazed was I that I told him New York was the capital of Pennsylvania.

At last, for sheer want of time, Mr Black said quietly, "That will do."

I sat down determined not to show feeling, though it was dreadfully humiliating to me.

"Bet he don't know them capitals himself," said Cosmos Kutz, soothingly. But I was a rigid Puritan in those days, and would not encourage one who lied. So the thing being over at last, I sailed past him to my desk, where I was given a teacher's certificate with a recommendation to study geography. But Cosmos Kutz was told to go to school another term, as he had failed.

When I got back to the farm I told Abannah all that had passed, not omitting to mention Mr Kutz's attentions. I was unsparing in my scorn of his untruthfulness. Abannah listened in her grave way and said—

"I think he must have been a little nervous. He's a nice boy, and I'd like thee to know more of him."

"He's the most ridiculous creature I've ever seen," I said.

"Thee must not speak so emphatically: thee knows thy sense of humour runs away with thee. What does thee see to laugh at in me?"

"Nothing," I could truthfully answer. "I like you far too well to laugh at you."

She bent down and kissed me very solemnly, and holding my face between both hands, said—

"I will be thy friend as long as thee will let me, for I like thee too." Then she added, "Don't be too hard on poor Cosmos: he's taken a fancy to thee, and I would like the boy to come under thy influence;

it would mebbe tone him a bit, and would not harm thee."

The next day being "first day," Abannah asked if I would go to meeting with her, for she was a Quakeress.

The meeting-house was built on the side of a hill, the tiny graveyard sloping up and away from it at the back. It was a lovely spot, so quiet and solemn that I felt awed, and in this frame of mind was just going in, when, to my disgust, I was joined by Cosmos Kutz himself, resplendent in new necktie and boots of the same yellow hue. As he passed me, taking off his hat almost to the ground, he thrust into my hand a small parcel and a note. The spell was broken and I smiled, for ridiculous he seemed to me in spite of Abannah's charitable estimate of him. However, I took my parcel with a twinge of conscience for having any dealings with a deceiver.

I was impatient to examine the contents, but Cosmos kept gazing at me fixedly and grinning.

The spirit at last moved Mr Andrew Jackson Rakestraw to adjourn the meeting. When I got back to my room I locked the door and opened the parcel —and—there lay a pair of bright yellow silk garters with huge plated buckles. I opened the note in a resigned frame of mind, and this is what he said :—

"Miss Ethel Greaves.

"Dear Miss,—I want to send you a present because you didn't tell on me yesterday. Them garters I come by. My sister where's plain" (referring to her church), "she wan them off of a man at the county fair at Whitehorse. That was some four week back, and she don't use them there things, because our women they tie up with bag strings, and she said you maybe could use them. Say. Have I the darest to keep comp'ny with you? I am looking for a Lady Friend where I can keep comp'ny with Saturday nights, and you didn't leave on about what I asked you at the examination, nor you didn't give me away; so I want you should leave me keep comp'ny with you—*steady* comp'ny, you know.—Yours truly,

Cosmos Kutz.

P.S. — Say. Just chuck a note over our barnyard gate on your road to school to-morrow morning. I'll be then all right. —Your true friend, C. Kutz."

This note was too good to enjoy alone; besides, I wanted advice as to the propriety of keeping "them garters," or, indeed, of returning them, for one alternative seemed as bad as another. I wanted them to illustrate the story of my first conquest when I got home; so I took them together with the note to Mrs Homsher, for she and I were now on the most loving terms. Abannah read the note.

"What would you do?" I said, as she stood looking at me over her glasses, smoothing the note between her fingers.

"Thee had better let him come this seventh day: thee'll never see him again after thee

goes home, and he may make trouble among the boys if thee's proud with him. Besides," she added, "his family is quite respectable. His folks come from up-country on the mother's side, that is. His mother was a Bachman."

"Yes; and how about the Kutzes?" grunted Manasseh from the sofa, where he was lying without his shoes or coat. "Them Kutzes is as low down mean a rum-drinkin' set as ever I hearn tell of nor seen neither."

"Well, but Cosmos is more a Bachman than a Kutz," said Abannah, mildly. ("Then his lying must come from the Kutz side of the family," I thought, and could not help smiling.) Whereupon I heard Mr Homsher grunt something about "snickerin' females."

"Thee just pay no attention to the note or the present: he'll be here on seventh day night."

And so at seven o'clock on the following Saturday evening, sitting at the little window in the "living-room," I saw a buggy, with the very lightest and brightest of yellow trappings, drive at a lively trot up the lane. One shining red spot told me this could be none other than the necktie of Cosmos. And so it proved, for that gentleman put up his horse and came into the house.

To my dread I found that the "living-room" had been vacated while I was looking out of the window. This was *my* comp'ny, and so the coast should be clear.

"Good evening to you, Miss Greaves," he said heartily.

"Good evening," frigidly, from me.

"A body must be glad for a nice evening onced," said he, rubbing his hands before the fire. "We're been having so much weather of late, a feller don't know how to dress." ("*You* don't know how to dress when there is *not* any weather," I mentally commented.) This put me into a good humour, and I decided that if I *must* spend an evening with this man, I would give myself up to it and be pleasant.

"Folks all well?" he said by way of introduction. "I heard Manasseh hurt his foot."

"Yes, he did; but I believe it is healed now."

"Say, you don't come from the country? No," he added, "I can tell it at your talk you don't; you speak too proper."

"No," I said, "I am not from the country, Mr Kutz."

"From G——, mebbe?" he persevered.

"Maybe," said I, laughing.

Finding no encouragement on this subject, he tried another quite gaily. "How does school go?"

"Oh, very well, thank you. What schools have you been to, Mr Kutz?" said I, taking the offensive while there was yet time, for I felt I could not parry all the questions he had set himself.

"Me? I attended the graded school at White Horse. Noah Glick, he taught it, you mind, there for a while."

"Noah Glick?" I gasped.

"Yes, Noah Q. Glick. Did you never meet him?"

"Dear me, no," I said.

"Not?" said he, smiling good-naturedly. "Well, it's him runs the Creamery now. It's a wonderful clean Creamery, he cleans it his own self."

"I've never been there."

"Ain't you never went to the Creamery? Well, the very next time Manasseh goes you ast him to haul you along; there's plenty room in his team, if you ain't too proud to set alongside of the milk-cans. Say," sitting bolt upright, and fumbling in his pockets, "I brought my Jew's harp and mouth-organ along. I'll play you the noo toon Frankie learned me. He told me you was so much for music. Mebbe you heard us last evening. Him and me was in the barn learning,—'Old Dog Tray' it's called," putting the Jew's-harp to his lips and beginning operations. "Mebbe you know it?"

"Yes," I said; Mr Homsher sang it for me last week."

"Him? It must o' sounded like corn falling on a tin pan."

"Mr Kutz," said I primly, "you forget you are in Mr Homsher's house."

"No, I don't forget; I know it blamed well, for a feller hasn't the dare to smoke a clay pipe in this shanty."

"But he smokes, doesn't he?"

"Him? Well, you just ast him that if you want to get a mouthful. He claims it's a bigger sin smokin' than drinkin'. He claims the man where smokes is as good as lost."

Having finished his speech he began his "toon." He put his feet upon the stove, tilted back in his chair, and played all the "toons" he knew.

"Did you ever hear 'My Old Kentucky Home'?"

I shook my head.

"Well, I'll have to play that there on the mouth-organ. It's most the sweetest toon I know."

At last he put his instruments into his pocket and looked at his watch.

"Don't leave me stay too late, Miss Greaves, if I should forget, because we killed to-day, and I was up at three, and I've got to get some sleep."

I shuddered. "Do you mean to say you had anything to do with *that*, Mr Kutz?"

"Why not? Me an pap does it alone. Didn't youse butcher yet? Manasseh's I *mean*."

"I really don't know," I said; "I wish you would talk of something else."

"It *kreisles* you, don't it?" he said sympathetically.

"I don't know what you mean; but I do think it's dreadful to help in such business and then talk about it."

"What I mean — it makes you feel kind o' *kreislich*."

"Yes, I suppose it does," I said.

He gazed at me with the deepest interest. Clearly he could not understand my "attitude."

"Say," he began, "have you any empty desks at Liberty?"

"Yes, there are two; why?"

"Well, you mind the superintendent said I should go to school this next term, and I just thought, as there ain't

much outdoor work going on just now, I could mebbe get a lift in arithmetic these two weeks till school stops. I hear you are so good at numbers."

"Oh, Mr Kutz," said I quickly, grasping the dreadful prospect, "I am not, and you, I am sure, must be further advanced" (I could not resist it), "being so much older than I." But suddenly remembering he had asked at the examination, "What's nine twelves?" I stopped confused.

"No, I ain't—I'm a regular doppel. I'm a Kutz for being dumb. Now, my mother, she was a Bachman. She's enough brighter'n what my father is. *All* them Bachmans is bright. Before she was married she lived neighbours to my father. She was so pretty, tall, and straight; but my father he's no tall man, he's 'pinched off.'[1] Yes, there never was a Bachman but where was pretty and tall; and there never was a Kutz but where was pinched off. And they all had them little squinty-up faces. Before my mother joined the Noo Mennonites she was wonderful dressy. She was counted the prettiest girl where walked the streets of Intercourse."

"Who are the New Mennonites?" I asked.

"Did you never see a Noo Mennonite? Well, that's the Church, you know. They're plain people. My father don't profess nothin', and that's the cause our house ain't as plain as some."

"And what church does your father belong to?" I said, now quite interested.

"Oh, he don't profess *nothin'*," he repeated.

"And you, Mr Kutz, are you a member?

"*Me?*" he said, quite hurt. "Do I *look* like I was plain—at my clothes? No, indeed," he added, smiling. "I don't make no profession: of course if I would I'd have to put on the garb, and that don't soot me. Say, the only colours they darse wear is grey and brown; and I like red too well, you can see it at me, can't you?"

"Yes, indeed," I said heartily, to his great satisfaction.

"Is your mother the only member of the New Mennonites, Mr Kutz?"

"Well, I guess *not*. My brother Ezra, he's my oldest brother, he gave himself up. And he was wonderful fashionable in his day; but now he's most the studiest [steadiest] boy that walks. He don't smoke, nor drink, nor chew. Nor he don't dance nor play cards. Dear me, I have to think," said Cosmos, reminiscently; "but I don't darse think, I'd go crazy. The good times me and him used to have when he was fashionable—him and my sister Emma."

"I didn't know you had a sister, Mr Kutz. Is she 'plain' too?"

"Well, I guess she is. And if it wouldn't 'a been for old Kit Empich, I believe she's 'a been fashionable to this day. They was such friends together. Kit, she's plain. Oh, but my

[1] Meaning short.

sister was pretty. She was counted a perfect beauty. And neat, as neat as some pipe-stem, and as straight as some Indian. She had six row of curls to her head—one hundred and thirty some curls. I don't just remember *how* many, but I know it was some thirty. I got the horrors of the Noo Mennonites ever since. It wouldn't soot me. I'm too friv-*u*-lous.

"Well," he said, rising and stretching himself vigorously, "I guess I must be moving. Well"—stiffening for the ceremony—"I'll bid you 'good night,' Miss Greaves," bowing very low, and shaking hands. "I guess I'll holler 'good night' after I get hitched, ain't?"

"What will you do *that* for, Mr Kutz?"

"Why, to leave missus know I'm gone, of course."

A few days after this, remembering Cosmos's advice, I said to Mr Homsher—

"Will you take me with you to the Creamery one morning?"

"Oh yes," he said indifferently; "if thee's a mind to get in along with the other baggage I don't care; but thee must be ready by five. I don't wait for nobody."

"Yes, and thee'd better comb thy hair," said "Aunt Leah," sneering over her mending.

These "aunties" boasted that they mended "according to the thread," which meant that they literally wove a piece of material with their needle into the hole. My hair was very curly, and refused to stay within bounds in this country air.

At five o'clock the next morning I went out to the "waggonshed" to await Mr Homsher on his way to the Creamery: but he was there before me, just turning out of the garden up the lane.

"I am ready, Mr Homsher, I said humbly. "Are you going to take me?"

"Here, get in," he said, clearing his throat in a way I have never heard throats cleared. He always did it when about to make a sarcastic speech.

"Why didn't thee put on more of them fool things girls wears?"

"What things do you mean?"

"Oh, them shines they catch the boys with—I reckon thee's got all thee can do to keep thy Cosmos. Here, get on, you onruly beast," he growled to the horse, which was walking at its own gait.

"How green that grass is," I said, determined to be good-natured, no matter what he said. Manasseh cleared his throat.

"There's other things that's green besides grass," said he dryly, looking at me.

"Meaning me?" I said loftily.

"Yes, meaning thee. That there's wheat. Seems to me if I was a teacher I'd find out a thing or two. And while I *am* talking I'll just tell thee another thing that mebbe thee don't know. Walking on rail fences ain't becomin' in a teacher, not even them that don't know wheat from grass. Nor I wouldn't go wadin' in the stream not fur from the road."

These things had I done, it is true; but this had been a long drive, and I noticed that Mr

Homsher had done nothing but find fault from beginning to end, and I determined to keep silence no longer.

"Mr Homsher," I said, sitting well back on the seat, "do you know you are a chronic grumbler? I have not once, since I've known you, heard you say a kind word of any one or anything."

"That's because every blame thing is so durn cont*rairy*," he said.

"No," said I promptly, determined to speak now the whole that was in my mind. "It is *you* who are perverse and——"

He deliberately wound the reins about the whip-socket, and sat round on the seat so as to face me.

"So that's what you've guessed up about me. And mebbe you ain't fur off." Then —with a sneer—pointing with the butt-end of the whip to a cow, said, "Ain't that a *dear* little cow?"

On Monday morning, the fourth week of my teaching, when I rang the school bell, there walked in with the rest none other than Cosmos Kutz.

I groaned. He was gorgeously dressed, and made a great sensation as he took his seat, having carefully dusted it first with his pocket-handkerchief. But I ignored him. He was evidently immensely popular with the girls; indeed, as the days went on, one word or one look of approval from Cosmos would make any one of the girls scorn to notice every other boy in the school.

I cannot tell wherein his charm lay, unless it was in his being, as they repeatedly told me, "immensely wealthy." But so was Medulah Weaver—one of the girls who wrote him notes, and brought him doughnuts and sand-tarts, and indeed appealed to his inner man in vain. I say "in vain," for Cosmos would none of them; and although it took me a long time to discover it, there was no use shutting my eyes to the appalling fact that it was upon myself that Cosmos had set his heart, and that he would gladly have made me too "immensely wealthy."

I would not believe it at first, though to be sure "signs" were not wanting.

The very first intimation I got of this romance was in the altered treatment I received at the hands of the older girls, who made my life generally miserable. If they had only known how gladly I would have dispensed with his attentions, they might have made their minds easy.

One day I heard Medulah Weaver say to Abbie Schue, "Frankie was going to walk home with teacher from the Debating Society last night, but he soon snuck off when he seen Cosmos makin' for her."

"What does he see *at* her, anyhow?" said Abbie.

"What, indeed!" thought I, as I walked away feeling very sad to be the unwilling cause of such "evil." That he *did* see something *at* me I could no longer doubt, for on the following Saturday morning

Cosmos declared himself. And all I could do was to laugh and laugh again. It was very cruel, I suppose, but I could not bring myself to believe him when he threw out dark hints as to what he would do if I refused him. He was so intensely comical to me, and I was very young, and could not take him seriously.

"You're most the onkindest girl I ever seen," he said ruefully. "Why, there's old Medulah Weaver'd be *glad* of me. You don't have to *marry* me," he explained, "if you'd only leave me keep comp'ny with you when you go home. I suppose I ain't tony enough to soot your folks. I don't speak proper enough."

"Indeed you *do*. I wouldn't have you alter your way of speaking for anything."

"Well, then, why daresent I just go to G—— and go along with youse to church or something? That's all I ast. And look here what I brung you," he said, suddenly brightening. Taking from his pocket a box and opening it tenderly, he displayed a dozen solid silver spoons. This was frightful. What *was* I to do?

"Mr Kutz," I was beginning in despair when he groaned—

"You sayed '*Cosmos*' just a while ago, and I like to hear you say it; it sounds so polittish."

"Well then, 'Cosmos'" (not kindly enough, I fear, for it to sound "polittish" this time). I had never been in love myself, and therefore did not believe in the sentiment. "I am very, very sorry, Cosmos, but I cannot take these spoons. I really must not, and will not, though you are very generous, and I do appreciate you thinking of me."

"Won't take them? Not when I brung them all the way from Philadelphia for you?"

"Oh, I am *so* sorry! Why don't you give them to Maggie?" I said rashly. "She's a very nice girl, and she's pretty too. I'm sure she likes you, Cosmos. Won't she do?"

"No; but I like you better'n any girl I ever seen. I took a shine to you that day at the examination when you was for cuttin' me because I lied. I can see you now," he said, smiling lovingly. "When I come down from the desk and said you was the right sort, you draw'd in your back so popular."

I *could* not help laughing, he *was* so funny.

"Cosmos," I said, "I can't tell you how sorry I am that this has happened, because I *do* like you, but I cannot love you, or take your spoons."

"Will you take them spoons?" he said grimly.

"Oh, Mr Kutz — Cosmos, I mean—I know it seems to you ungrateful, but I should not be allowed to take them——"

He did not give me time to finish my sentence, for he solemnly gathered up his spoons, his hat and coat, and left.

I was dreadfully grieved. I liked Cosmos, he was highly entertaining, and yet, in spite of my amusement, I could not

help seeing the man was in earnest. Perhaps had I had a little more vanity I should have believed in him; but having a very humble opinion of my charms, I could not think any one would suffer on my account. But that was Saturday. I dreaded going to school on Monday morning more than I can tell; but when I got there, and no Cosmos came, my suspense was terrible.

Had he made away with himself? He had hinted darkly on Saturday, I thought. Tuesday came, and he did not appear. By Wednesday I could bear it no longer. I must know the worst.

"Does any one know why Cosmos Kutz is absent?" I inquired from my desk.

Nobody knew. "Drowned," I decided.

On Thursday, however, when I was "one field and a lane" from the schoolhouse, I was met by a noisy delegation of boys and girls, each trying to be heard first.

"Cosmos Kutz has give himself up," they were saying excitedly.

"Oh, what for?" I asked. "What has he been doing?"

"He's in school. You'd ought to see him. He's give himself up."

"What do you mean?" I demanded, crossly this time. "Given himself up to what or whom? Tell me at once."

Then they all fell back, walking very slowly and looking at me pityingly.

"Why, he's turned plain."

"Turned *what?*" I said. "Will some one tell me in decent English what Cosmos Kutz has done?"

"Why, he ain't fashionable no more."

"He never was," I retorted.

"He dresses plain."

"All the better," I persisted. "Why do you make such a fuss about that?"

"Yes, but he wears the garb. He's joined the Noo Mennonites."

Oh, *now* I understood. And the meaning turned me cold. And *I* was responsible for that.

I went into the schoolroom, and there sat Cosmos. No more the bold bedecked Cosmos. He now wore a "broad-brimt" hat. I was told afterwards that he had had it made broader in the brim than those worn by the oldest and strictest member. His clothing was square in fashion, buttoned up high at the neck. Did I say "buttoned"? No. Buttons were vanity in those days, and not allowed: his coat was fastened with hooks and eyes. He kept his hat on as I passed him—he who before loved to "tip" it to me—and did so upon the very faintest pretext.

Eddie came up to my desk, where I was sitting (I had not yet rung the school bell), and whispered as he "dusted it off"—

"He daresent tip his hat now he's joined the meetin'. He don't become them clothes, do you think?" said Eddie confidentially.

"But, Eddie," I said, "he still wears the yellow boots, I see. Surely *they* are not plain?"

"Yes, but only till them's

wore out. He says it wouldn't be becomin' to throw them away as long'r they're most noo. When them get wore out he must get plain ones."

"But, Eddie," I ventured to ask, "do you know *why* he gave himself up?"

"Why, yes'm—he says it was trouble done it." And I rang the bell.

Well for me that my teaching in that school would be over in a few days, for I could not endure the pathetic change that those "plain clothes" wrought in the worldly Cosmos. It was bad enough now, but when "them shoes was wore out," and he put off that last sign of the original man, it would be unendurable.

When the last day finally came, and the "closing exercises" were over, I was thankful indeed.

I had been away from my home six weeks, and it sometimes seemed as many years.

Early on Saturday morning Mr Homsher drove me to the station. When I was all ready to get into the buggy the "aunties" shook hands with me limply, Aunt Ruth saying grudgingly—

"Well, thee could have made more trouble than thee did."

Eddie and Frankie, I know, were truly sorry to see me go, for we had been very good friends.

As for Maggie, she wept outright.

"I guess I might have done more for you, she sobbed, "but I'm such a *schussel*.[1] I just go pell-mell and don't take no account."

"Ah, but you have been very good to me, Maggie," I said. "Indeed, if it had not been for your kindness on that first Sunday night, I think I must have gone home the next morning."

As for Mrs Homsher, we mutually promised to write, and never to lose sight of each other.

Through her I learned that Cosmos Kutz, after wearing the "plain clothes" six months on probation, yearned so violently after the flesh-pots of Egypt that he once more put on his worldly apparel, and went to a very fashionable pleasure resort to test his hold upon the world.

In a month he went home, declaring there was "nothing in it"—meaning the world, I fear—and again "dressed plain." Then chancing to meet with and admire a girl who was fashionable, and having in vain urged her to "give herself up," he put on the world once more. But finding this girl far more "friv-*u*-lous" than he had at first supposed, he once more and for ever joined the meeting, of which he is now a deeply-respected deacon.

In the autumn I received a letter from Amos Harding, telling me I had been re-elected as teacher of Liberty School. But my parents, on hearing of (what seemed to them only) my perilous experiences, would not allow me to go back to Kutztown.

[1] A "schussel" is Pennsylvanian German for just such a girl as Maggie.

IN THE HEART OF KALAMANTAN.

BY HUGH CLIFFORD, C.M.G.

SEATED on the ground, his back resting against the wall of the stockade, his crooked knees supporting his elbows, his palms lying flat, one against either cheek, he stared moodily at the sunset. His figure was thin and wasted; the colour of his skin was sallow and opaque; premature lines had furrowed themselves upon a face which should have been that of a man in his first youth. Even now that the glory in the western sky furnished beauty enough to fill the sight of any man, his eyes were restless and shifty. Every minute or so he recalled his gaze from the distant horizon and threw anxious, uneasy glances about him, as though he dreaded the approach of some enemy, as though threatened by some ever-present danger. Perhaps it was the same feeling of insecurity which had caused him to seat himself with the only solid structure in sight protecting his back from possible assault.

The little block-house, surrounded by its wooden palisade, above which the high-pitched palm-leaf roof rose skywards in a dust-coloured pyramid, stood in the centre of a wide, flat valley. On every side for a distance of four or five miles the ground stretched to the foothills in a series of low, sweeping undulations, the whole smothered completely by a waste of coarse, rank grass. The squalid Mûrut villages—each consisting of a single long barrack divided into narrow dwellings all opening out on to a common verandah—nestled in the hollows, and were seen so indistinctly between the grass tufts on the higher ground that they did nothing towards breaking the flatness of the plain or relieving its aching monotony. Fencing the valley in a seemingly endless chain without break or outlet, ranges of vast mountains rose abruptly from its edge, those on the north clustering about the feet of a giant peak some 11,000 feet in height, those to the south, east, and west sloping upwards to lesser summits 3000 or 4000 feet above sea-level. Once long ago, in the dim recesses of an unrecorded past, the valley had been a lake, hidden here from the eyes of men in the heart of many mountains: now the waters had subsided, giving place to a race of unclean men, who squatted like foul parasitic growths on the rich alluvial soil; but to the solitary white man the loneliness of the place could not have been more intense had the valley retained from the beginning its prehistoric aspect.

That ring of tumbled hill-tops, hemming him in on every side, had for him a terrible fascination—the fascination of fear. When first he came to this place it had taken him many days of

heart-breaking toil to scramble up the slopes by means of the precipitous native paths, and two more to slip and slide down into the valley in which he was to be stationed. Even now the memory of that tramp was a nightmare which set all his limbs aching: he recalled the hours spent in climbing, climbing, climbing up that seemingly interminable path, the agony of looking ahead and seeing the slim line of track stretching heavenwards in unbroken ascent; the cramp occasioned in his feet by walking for miles along the shelving slopes of hillsides, by struggling over smooth, round boulders in the beds of streams; the giddiness which turned him sick as he tight-roped along a ridge from which the ground fell away in sheer pitches for hundreds of feet on either hand; the falls which as he descended shook him from head to foot, covering him with bruises; the heat, the sweat, the toil, the insufferable sense of exhaustion and fatigue. At the time he had told himself that if he were to fall sick he would have no alternative but to die where he was; that he could never return over that vast barrier of mountains; and the thought had been ever present to his mind since then, had grown upon him as he brooded over it, fretting his nerves, working upon his imagination, filling him with a sickening fear, till at last the valley had become to him a prison-house, the mountains rows of inexorable warders shutting him off from life, from human beings, from all the civilised world.

He was that unusual thing, a very sensitive and imaginative Englishman. Most of the boys of our race whom Fate chucks headlong into distant, God-forgotten crannies, there to teach savage folk the virtues which they instinctively dislike, and to wean them from the vices which they naturally love, have certain sterling qualities which stand them in good stead. They may not be brilliant men at their books; they may have been ploughed and plucked until they are furrowed and bare; but they are usually endowed with a perfect, an almost sublime self-confidence, an unquestioning sense of their own superiority of race, which enables them to rule men of a lesser breed with a calm strength which has a force that is more than Medic, an utter fearlessness which is almost stupid in its complete contempt of danger—its inability to realise that such a thing exists—and above all, a sound common-sense which is worth all the 'ologies. Such men as these go into the wild corners of the world—barren places in an intellectual sense, where no water is—and live there, or die there, as the case may be, with an absolute light-heartedness, barely realising that their fate is harder than that of their fellows, and becoming so absorbed by the interest of their task that for a space all other created things sink into utter insignificance. Boys who live the lives of dogs, alone and unfriended among a savage race, will speak to you with enthusiasm of the charms of their impossible "district," will compare most unfavourably with it the

little steaming towns of the East, where white men strive to cheat themselves into forgetting that their exile is yet unended; and it is only those of us who have passed through a similar experience who can detect the sanity underlying this apparent mania.

But now and again it happens that those who select men for these thankless billets make what the Americans call "a bad break." The average English boy, as I have said, has an inbred aptitude for this special class of work, and this leads people to forget that there are exceptions to this, as to every rule. Gervase Fornier, the solitary white man now seated alone gazing at the setting sun, was one of these exceptions. His relatives were poor, and it was necessary that the boy should work for his living, but he had been signally unfortunate in his attempts to satisfy the examiners at Burlington House as to his intellectual fitness for some branch of the public service. He was by no means lacking in brains, and possessed some culture both literary and artistic; but his acquirements were not of that solid order which commands the respect, and is rewarded by the marks, of the Civil Service Examination Board. Perhaps he wasted too much of his time, which should have been devoted to cramming, in reading books not in the curriculum, and more in writing little stories, which his mother pronounced to be charming and quite as good as De Quincey, and the editors, to whom they were submitted, declined to use with a quite wonderful unanimity. At last old Mr Fornier, who did not share his wife's admiration for their son, said roundly that he had wasted money enough upon Gervase's education, and the opportunity occurring about that time, shipped him off to Kalamantan, in the service of which State his influence had secured the boy a nomination.

Gervase felt the picturesqueness of his exile acutely, and wrote some wishy-washy verse upon the subject between the intervals of sea-sickness, deck-dances, and flirtations; but the little tropical town in which he was first stationed took a great deal of the gilding off the situation. There was a good deal of office work to be done, the Malay language to be studied, and a hard-bit gang of short-tempered senior officers to be satisfied, who proved to be even less amenable than the Civil Service Commissioners themselves. Gervase suffered pangs of home-sickness. His pride sustained a severe shock when he made the discovery that to those about him there was nothing picturesque or unusual in the fact of his enforced banishment,—that he was merely one of an unconsidered pack of boys who were valued solely for the amount of work which they were able to get through in a given time. He was desperately miserable, and he would have given up the struggle very willingly, but his father, who distrusted the young man's perseverance, kept him so short of money, over and above the pittance which he earned, that

he could not even save enough to pay the cost of his return passage to Europe, even if he had been able to summon the courage necessary for an interview with his irate parent. Long before the death of a brother officer led to Gervase being sent up-country into the district which is the heart of Kalamantan, the youngster had watched every atom of the expected romance vanish from his life of exile. Everything was prosaic, commonplace, squalid, ugly, uninteresting; but it was not until he had reached his station in the interior that the full measure of his misery was made plain to him.

"Are you going to send young Fornier to succeed Bush?" the headquarters Resident had asked his chief.

"Yes," said the latter grimly.

"He won't do any good there."

"So far as I know there isn't any good to be done."

"He is not the cut of youngster for an up-country station, to my thinking."

"He is not the cut of youngster for any station. In the interior there is nothing to be done, and Fornier, if I know him, will do it."

The other laughed. "Still, I cannot help thinking that it will prove a failure. I doubt whether he has either the pluck or the stamina necessary for the job."

The chief stretched himself elaborately, and spoke through a half-stifled yawn. "I'm inclined to agree with you," he said; "but it is about the only chance I can see of making a man of the fellow — an off-chance, I admit, but it's fair to give it to him."

The chief was a hard as well as a strong man, and in the years that were done he had himself gone through the searching ordeal of long solitary exile among folk of an alien race, had come through it triumphantly, with a great reputation for skill and nerve in the management of turbulent tribes, and was now wont to speak lovingly of his curious experiences, comparing unfavourably the office-pent but comfort-laden present with the freedom of the rough, adventurous, peril-beset past. He was of all men the one most ill-calculated to understand what a similar trial would hold for a man like Gervase Fornier, or to appreciate the effects which it would be likely to produce upon his sensitive, imaginative timid temperament.

From the beginning of his sojourn in the heart of Kalamantan the horror of the place had gripped the boy. It was not only the utter loneliness which those ramparts of blue mountains emphasised, not only the sense of awful isolation, of entire self-dependence cut off from human aid, which numbed and paralysed him, it was the looks, the habits, the savagery of the wild creatures by whom he was surrounded that filled him with disgust, with unconquerable revulsion, with ungovernable fear. They were filthy Mûruts, one of the lowest races of our human stock, who ground their teeth to the gums, plucked out their eyebrows and eyelashes, thus giving to their

faces an air of deformity, and parted their frowsy locks in the middle after twisting their long hair into dirty chignons, so that every man among them appeared to belong to some infinitely degraded branch of the female sex. For the most part they wore no clothing save a foul loin-clout; but occasionally they went abroad dressed in grotesque coats, sleeveless, tightly-fitting, and ornamented with incongruous tails, long like those of the Pied Piper, cut after the fashion of the evening garments of civilised men. They were lazy, improvident, and abominable in their habits; they converted their annual crop of rice into atrocious native liquor, of which men, women, and little children drank to intoxication with open shamelessness, lying about in bestial attitudes until they had partially recovered their sobriety, when they would crawl back to the jars to suck up more drink through the bamboo pipes until they again lapsed into a state of unconsciousness. For the greater part of the year they starved; for not only the rice but the tapioca and the jungle-roots were all put to the same purpose, and there was always a stock of liquor to draw upon even when good food had not been tasted for many hours. But though these things filled young Fornier with disgust, they would not of themselves have been sufficient to cause him fear. The Mûruts often waxed riotous in their cups, and the throbbing of the drums from a village where a drinking-bout was in progress pulsed across the valley to his stockade, telling him of the savagery so near at hand, and setting his over-quick imagination to work picturing awful things which might befall. But he had his reasons for these fears.

One day about a month after his arrival in the valley he had visited one of the villages, and had taken his seat in the long verandah, which was the common-room of all the dwellings. A vast collection of earthenware jars, the only valuables of the Mûruts, and at that time their only currency, flanked the edge of the verandah, and the naked folk squatted around in grotesque attitudes without regard to courtesy or respect such as the Malayan peoples use. The place was stuffy and dark, filled with the horrible odour of the Mûruts, mingled with that of the lean swine in the ill-kept sties below the building. Coming suddenly out of the burning sun-glare of the noontide into the gloom of the place, it was some time before Gervase's eyes could see anything distinctly; but at length, looking upwards, he caught sight of certain objects which made his heart stand still. They were round in shape and blackened with soot, and were suspended from a beam in a long line, draped with the greasy leaves called *daun sĭlat*, which extended from one end of the verandah to the other; and they had great, deep, cavernous eyes, which glared at the boy above mouths which grinned with a horrible, unchanging merriment. They were human skulls, and as he

looked at them, the whole row seemed to have fixed its sightless eye-sockets upon him in awful invitation; those jaws, which had been clenched in the agony of a violent death, to be laughing in concert at the doom which in his turn awaited him. Gervase fancied that he could almost hear the sound of that ghoulish merriment, of that still chorus that the voices of the dead had spoken aloud in prophecy of his own doom. Hurriedly he leapt to his feet and pushed his way through the Mûruts out into the open air, and then stumbled back to his stockade sick with horror at what he had seen.

And the memory haunted him. Involuntarily he pictured to himself the manner of the unforeseen death which had robbed each one of those grinning skulls of the life that had animated it; in his dreams he was present at fifty hideous murders; twenty times a-day the head-hunters, in fancy, were upon him; a stir caused by a lizard in the grass set his heart beating; every chance noise left him faint and sweating; the drums of the drunken folk in the valley spoke a sure message, and in his soul he cowered at their beat. His Dyak policemen told him blood-curdling tales with the light-hearted brutality of their kind, —tales of their own head-hunting traditions, and stories of the manner in which the Mûruts had obtained fresh trophies by stealing upon unarmed people while they sowed their crops, upon mothers tending their little ones, upon strayed children, decrepit old men, or upon sleeping warriors. Soon Gervase, still tortured by that uneasy imagination of his, began to fear the Dyaks as much as the Mûruts. They had the tradition of head-hunting behind them; the longing for it, for aught he knew, still lurked in their blood. Might it not break out afresh some day? Yet these men were his only guard, his only protectors; he shared his stockade with them: he felt himself to be entirely at their mercy!

If Gervase had known a little more, and had made a more sparing use of that torturing imagination of his, he might have been saved much mental agony. Most of the heads adorning the Mûrut huts in his valley were the trophies of almost prehistoric times. For some years the ancient practice had been abandoned by the people, who stood in considerable awe of their white rulers; and even the blood-stained records of Kalamantan of an earlier date told of few European victims sacrificed to the savage custom. Drunken or sober, the Mûruts around him did not so much as dream of seeking the head of their district officer, though the young braves might secretly covet it, and the Dyaks were as loyal and good-hearted a set of little people as a man might wish to be befriended by when in a tight place. In reality, had he but known it, Gervase was as safe in the heart of Kalamantan as in the gut of Piccadilly—safer, indeed, for in this distant

valley men ran no chance of being obliterated by hurrying hansom, reckless cyclist, or awkward motor-car. But the boy was alone, isolated, cut off from his fellows, and the dreary monotony of his days fretted his nerves to excruciation, making him a more easy prey to fear than he himself would have deemed possible six months before. Reading his history, you may say, perhaps, that the boy was of no account; that he was that abomination of the Englishman —a "funkstick." But transfer yourself for a moment from your own secure and comfortable surroundings; go forth in spirit into the heart of Kalamantan; let its loneliness, its savagery, the horror of its people, enter into your soul, and see if thereafter you are equally ready to condemn Gervase Fornier, the boy of sensitive temperament, on whose excitable imagination his incongruous environment exercised so disastrous an effect. And remember also that where danger is concerned, and fear aroused, it matters less whether the peril be real than whether he who suffers believes in the reality of its existence.

As Gervase sat now, his back protected from possible attack by the wall of his stockade, he gazed outwards at the western line of mountains. Above the hill-tops the sunset glow was firing the heavens with a blaze of wonderful colours—oranges, crimsons, and reds, great wide washes of pink, splashes of yellow, flecks of gorgeous tints for which men have no name —all rich and warm with the luxuriant beauty of the tropics. Higher yet in a broad expanse pure and stainless, and here and there slashing the brighter hues with slim inlets, the sky showed an ethereal azure, intensifying the magnificence of the more pronounced colours. Against it the tumbled heaps of mountain stood out prominently, seemingly close at hand, tinged a deep, clear cobalt of a tint so vivid, yet so even and regular, that the hills had the air of having been dyed in some giant's vat. At the feet of the range, and in the near foreground, the crude greens of grass and shrub gave off their colour with a brightness almost dazzling, in strange contrast to the intense blueness of the hills—the glory and the tenderness in the sky, the deep tint of the mountains, and the vivid verdure of the valley together making a blending of brilliant hues which intoxicated with its splendour.

Gervase, leaning slightly forward, drank in the beauty with a feverish eagerness which seemed to grudge each second of the transient spectacle. He was by nature wedded to the soft and lovely things of life,—to tender lights, sweet sounds, dainty garments, luxurious furniture, to all the concomitants of an advanced and fastidious civilisation. His appreciation of beauty amounted to a passion, and here, in the heart of Kalamantan, Nature daily fed his craving during the evening hour. But the six-o'clock sun-

set—in these lands the sun goes to bed with exemplary regularity — had of late held for Gervase yet another solace more precious than all. From the door of the stockade a line of slim posts staggered off to the skyline, leaning this way and that, like the members of a drunken procession. They were crowned with white insulators, connected together by a thin wire, and at six o'clock in the evening the Morse hours were over, and the telephone in the stockade put Gervase in communication with his only European neighbour, a district officer who had his station over the mountains some sixty miles away. The track between the two places was villainous, and climbed up the sides of the hills as a fly crawls up a pane of glass, and it took a strong man six days to cover the distance on foot. Now, however, the wisdom of the ages had found a means of annihilating space, and every evening Gervase sought comfort and companionship by conversing with his distant countryman, whose face he had never seen.

Hardly had the glow died down in the western sky than he dragged himself to his feet, and entering his bedroom, rang up the one station with which he was connected by wire.

"Are you there, Burnaby?"

An answer came back in Malay.

"Where is the Tûan?" Gervase asked in the vernacular.

"He is not here," replied the native. "There is trouble in the upper country, and the Tûan left this place this morning. The Mûruts of the interior are on the war-path, village striving with village, each seeking the heads of their fellows, and the Tûan hath gone forth to punish. The villages will be sad in their livers, and poorer by much mulcting before he returns!" And a gurgling laugh rippled along the wire. Burnaby was a man who ruled the more turbulent natives of the far interior with an iron hand, and his people thought all the world of him.

"When will he return?" Gervase asked anxiously. The disappointment of not finding his friend was keen; the rumour of trouble gave him an unpleasant shock. If the Mûruts had broken out there, why should they not do the like in his own valley? He did not realise that there are Mûruts and Mûruts, that the men of the far interior still try spasmodically to keep up the time-honoured customs which have been effectually stamped out in more accessible places, and that an outbreak of the kind among them could not conceivably affect his own peaceable but intoxicated tribesmen.

"When will Tûan Bambi return?" repeated the Voice. "Allah and the Tûan alone know! When the Tûan goeth forth to speak with evil folk and teach to them lessons, he is wont to be absent until the work is accomplished—it may be days, or weeks, or even months. Till the villagers sit down and bow their heads, paying heavy fines, Tûan Bambi will not return. I am moved with pity when I think of those

so foolish people!" And the Voice laughed again.

Gervase racked his brains for something more to say. He was loth to sever himself at once from the only station in his neighbourhood. The Voice through the telephone seemed to him to afford a sense of protection, of companionship, to make his isolation less complete, less dreary. For some minutes he asked pointless questions and received wearied answers from the Voice, but at last the latter lost patience, and asking to be excused that it might depart to eat rice, abruptly ceased the conversation by ringing off the telephone.

With a heavy heart Gervase turned away, and sat down at a rickety table upon which his unappetising meal was spread. Bad food vilely cooked is one of the delights of a very distant station in Kalamantan. No self-respecting cook can be induced to take up his abode in such a place, and the result is much discomfort and a fair amount of indigestion. The meal over, Gervase smoked a cigar on his verandah, reading for the hundredth time one of his few books, — a dearth of literature is another of the exile's crosses,—and then went to bed. But, as was his wont, he slept ill. All through the night his imagination played him countless tricks. He dreamed of horrors, and woke with a start, sweating and panting, to lie in open-eyed wretchedness, listening with wildly beating heart to every chance sound within the stockade. The drums in the valley and the drunken yells of the Mûruts came to his ears, and he wondered whether they were making ready to join their fellows of Burnaby's district in a head-hunt. The stealthy footfall of some one moving about the stockade made him sit up, grasping his pistol, and at other times the very stillness of the night, given over wholly to bird and insect, filled him with unreasoning dread. Before the dawn he fell into a heavy sleep, from which he awoke oppressed by a vague sense of misfortune besetting him. For a few minutes he lay groping in his mind for the cause of this new weight upon his spirits, and then with a pang he remembered that Burnaby was absent from the other end of the telephone, that there was trouble over the mountains, and that his fearful presentiments of evil were beginning to assume more definite shape, to threaten him with a more concrete peril. But the added feeling of isolation, which Burnaby's departure occasioned, put the crown upon his misery. He had learned of late to lean upon this man whom he had never seen, who was known to him only as a voice made unmusical by the twang and echo of the wire. At times he had almost ceased to remember the distance which separated him from his invisible companion, and he had become accustomed to talk of his fears and his sufferings with a frankness which he could never have used to one into whose eyes he was looking while he unburdened himself of his humiliating con-

fessions. And Burnaby had been very good to him; he had tried to hearten up the youngster, giving him comfort and advice, and seeking to reassure him as to the safety of his position by relating to him incidents illustrative of the lack of courage of the Mûruts, drawn from his own profound experiences. He had not succeeded, for his own stolid self-confidence and pluck made it difficult for him to realise the state of Gervase's mind, and the measure of his sufferings; but, none the less, that voice from out the void had been Fornier's salvation, had saved him from madness, perhaps from worse, and now that it was suddenly taken away without a moment's warning, the loss was crushing.

Gervase Fornier never knew clearly how he fought through the week that followed. The harvest had just been reaped, and the crop had been a fat one, wherefore the Mûruts of the valley enjoyed themselves excessively after their fashion. That is to say, the villages feasted one another by day and by night, each setting before its squalid guests meat which had been kept in the hollow of a bamboo until it had liquefied; inviting them to suck up fiery native spirits through slim pipes which the hosts pushed down with shaking hands into the deepest recesses of the liquor-jars, where the most intoxicating portions of the beverage lurk, while men, women, and little children lay pell-mell about the hut verandahs, vomiting, sleeping off the fumes, singing and shouting discordantly, and waking from their drunken torpors to suck up more and more draughts of the poisonous stuff. This meant that the valley was turned for the time into a hideous pandemonium, that the shouts and yells of the drunken savages were heard almost incessantly, and that the throb of their drums, which seemed ever inciting the people to outrage and fresh excesses, beat and pulsed wildly from every quarter. The noise fretted Gervase's jangled nerves; some of his Dyaks sneaked off to the villages and returned gloriously inconsequent and merrily pugnacious. Gervase, who only knew Malay, began to think that he overheard portions of the Dyaks' conversation—carried on, of course, in their own dialect—and fancied that a plot was being laid against him by the only folk to whom he could look for help or protection. His fears now, as always, were wholly imaginary, but they were none the less real to him for that, and since Burnaby was absent he had no one to whom to turn for comfort or advice, and he brooded over his troubles to a degree which threatened his sanity. He would have thrown up the fight and have made tracks for the coast, but he could not make up his mind to take a step which would mean disgrace, for in his heart he knew that no one would attach importance to the vague signs of danger which were sufficiently convincing to him. Things look so different when seen from different places. He knew what he would have thought six months earlier of

the conduct of any one who had been driven from his post by such intangible fears, and were he to give way his fellows would judge him no less harshly. He had enough pride to dread such a verdict being passed upon himself, and unreasoningly he told himself that all would be well when Burnaby returned to Bânat. Every evening at sundown he went to the telephone and asked for news of his friend, but always the same voice answered his inquiries in Malay. He learned to hate the tones of that voice, to loathe the chuckling laugh with which it mocked his disappointment, and daily with a groan he rang off the telephone and resigned himself to yet another night of searching anxiety and increasing apprehension. What if Burnaby should never return? The question came to him with haunting insistence. It had no answer. Only a blank, an impenetrable gloom of blackest night, lay beyond, out of which the grim spectre of madness grinned at him with an awful foreknowledge of the future, just as something else had done, . . . what was it? . . . Ah! he knew, those terrible things which had glared at him from the beam in the Mûrut huts.

The telephone bell rang out sharply, breaking on the silence of the sleeping stockade. It was nine o'clock at night, and the Dyak policemen were slumbering heavily. From the valley the shouts and the pulsing of the drums still sounded, but Gervase Fornier was in bed. Nevertheless he was across the floor and at the mouth of the instrument before the tinkle of the bell had ceased, and his voice trembled with excitement as he called down the wire, "Is that you, Burnaby?" and when the answer came, "Thank God!" It was a prayer of thankfulness spontaneous and from the heart, but it sounded like a sob.

"What's the matter with *you?*" asked the Voice. It sounded strangely thin and faint. Perhaps the batteries needed renewing.

"Oh, I've had an awful time, Burnaby! All the Mûruts are on the drink, and the valley fairly reeks with the stink of their filthy food and the fumes of their liquor. I feel sure a row is brewing, and, Burnaby, the Dyaks are drinking too. I don't know what to do with them."

"Knock their heads together," said the Voice.

"But really, Burnaby, what ought I to do?"

"I should not fuss about it, if I were you. Give them a telling off when they're sober, and a little pack-drill to keep 'em so; but we'll talk about it to-morrow. I'm too dog-tired to talk any more now. Good night!"

Next evening when the Morse hours were over the conversation was resumed.

"Tell me about your own doings," said Gervase.

"I got word that there was trouble in the interior, about twenty miles from here; so I started off at a moment's notice

with half-a-dozen of my fellows, —Dyaks, you know, — and a few Mûruts for guides and bearers. We had a tremendous tramp of it, all up hill and down dale, villainous country to march through, and impossible to fight in if these jungle-folk knew their business, which they don't. I got to one village and found all the roof-trees hung with new bunches of *daun sílat*, and a rotting skull, freshly boiled, being seasoned at the top of a split pole, in a kind of basket they call a *sĕrâwak*. All the villagers were drunk with new wine, like those chaps in the Bible, and I collared the lot of them before they had got over their "Monday heads." They pointed out the popular hero who had taken the head—it belonged to a stray female whom he had caught bathing —so I took him along with me, and fined the village as many jars as they could carry, and sent them back to Bânat to lodge them in my house here against my return. They went like lambs."

There was a strange weakness in the tones of Burnaby's voice which struck Gervase.

"Can you hear me distinctly?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Your voice sounds so faint."

"Does it?"

"Do you think there is anything wrong with the battery?"

"Perhaps; but I would not bother about it, if I were you. You can hear me well enough to understand, can't you?"

"Yes—go on with your story. It's wonderful to me the way you manage these savages."

"There isn't such a thing as a savage in the world. It's merely a question of a difference of prejudice and a divergence, more or less material, in the point of view. If you could see things with a Mûrut's eyes you would understand that a life is a life, and therefore that a head is a head, and that the sex or the size of a creature matters not at all, provided that it is animated with the one and stands possessed of the other. Also, all sane persons who love whole skins naturally prefer attacking something that won't fight to tackling something that will. Our dislike of the practice of killing women and children is a prejudice of quite recent growth, and our disapproval of alcoholism is more modern still. It was not even shared by our grandfathers! Besides, if your life was bounded by a little district in the heart of Kalamantan, with no ambition, no prospects, and no moral sense,—which itself is a thing of recent growth as anthropologists reckon time,—you would very likely take to drink yourself. Better men than you or I have done so in similar circumstances. As for the putrid meat you are always complaining of, that, too, is only a question of degree and of personal taste. Don't we white men eat high game and venison? Don't we devour cheese that sits up and joins in the conversation. A fine old Gorgonzola would probably sicken a Mûrut every bit as much as a Mûrut's liquid meat offends your fastidiousness.

As for personal cleanliness, why, even the upper classes never washed a hundred years ago, and many of the lower classes never so much as look at a tub, even to the present day. When you go into the thing you will find that we haven't such a great pull over the Mûruts even now when we are so proud of our civilisation. We are all savages together, if you will use the word, and we shall only transmute and never succeed in really eradicating any of our primordial instincts to the end of the chapter."

"What a tirade! But I prefer our form of savagery, all the same. But tell me some more about your doings up-country."

"There isn't much to tell. Word that I was on the path had reached the next village in advance, and I had a little trouble there. They had three heads seasoning in the *sĕrâwaks*, and a *bângun* was in progress, specially arranged, I imagine, to show me that they were keeping their tails up."

"What in the wide world is a *bângun?*" asked Gervase.

"It is one of the cheerful practices of the wild Mûruts which used once to be very general, but is now dying out, together with other old customs. I'm pretty broad-minded, but I am bound to own that I disapprove of a *bângun*, and my people know that it is the one thing that riles me past bearing."

"But what is it?"

"It's a devil-dance of a peculiar kind which combines sport with utility. It provides safe sport, such as the Mûruts love, and it is useful because it establishes something like the penny-post between this world and the next. The letters transmitted are never answered, of course, but then in my experience that is the fate of the majority of the letters we send to people in this world, and one can hardly expect the dead, who doubtless have their own affairs to look after, to prove better correspondents than the living."

"What *are* you talking about?"

"I'm talking about a *bângun*. The Mûruts get hold of some aged or decrepit person, generally a cripple or a woman, and hang them up in a cage and torture them. They try to keep them alive as long as they can, but as everybody present is gloriously drunk, and as men, women, and children are all equally anxious to prick and stab them with their knives and spears, charging them the while with messages to their dead relatives, the victims of the *bângun* are wont to be used up rather quickly. At every prick and stab the assailant cries out, 'Give my compliments to the shade of my father, or aunt, or sister, or cousin, as the case may be, when you get to the top of Kina-Balu, and this wound which I inflct is the token you shall bear them!' You know the Mûruts think that when they die their spirits go to the peaks of the great mountain, and personally I am inclined to place credence in the theory. I doubt very much whether Satan would give a Mûrut a free pass into *his* do-

main, and no matter how many houses there may be in heaven, it would be no place for me if the Mûruts live in any of them! Well, when I got to Chĕnchâdu —the village I was telling you of—they were having the very deuce of a *bângun*, the victim being an old crippled hag, bent double with years and deformity, and bleeding in fifty places. I rushed the place and saved the old thing; but the Mûruts were pot-valiant, and we had to kill a few of them before we got the creature away. She showed no particular enthusiasm at her deliverance, and sat in a corner of the hut moping and mowing at us like a lost soul. I fancy the *bângun* had over-excited her, and that she was not quite clear as to whether or no she had arrived at Kina-Balu prematurely. Still I'm glad we saved her, and a good few of the men of the village will now be able to deliver their messages to their dead relatives in person, which will have a good moral effect, I hope."

Gervase was aghast at what he had heard, and the apparent coolness of the Voice, in spite of its faint far-away sound, in a manner intensified the horror. "What an awful experience!" he said. "Were any of your men hurt?"

"One killed and two or three of us wounded. I got a scratch with a spear myself—nothing to worry about, but it has given me a little fever, so I don't think that I will talk much more to-night. We gave the village a lesson it won't forget in a hurry. To-morrow you must tell me how you have been getting on. Keep your pecker up. Good night."

Next evening the conversation of the two men who had never looked into one another's faces and yet were friends, each having caught more than a passing glimpse of the other's soul, began again at the usual hour.

"How is your wound to-night?" asked Gervase.

"Oh, it's nothing much, thank you. I have not even reported myself sick."

Gervase heaved a great sigh of relief. During the last few hours he had been torturing himself with the fear that Burnaby might be invalided to the coast, in which case he, Gervase, would experience once more that soul-searching solitude which had wellnigh proved too much for him during his friend's short absence in the interior. He could not stifle an exclamation of thankfulness and satisfaction, which the wire repeated faithfully to the white man at the other end sixty miles away.

"What are you thanking God for, Fornier? The slightness of my wound or my failure to report it?" and the Voice laughed rather hysterically.

"Oh, Burnaby, what a cur I am!" cried Gervase impulsively. He had formed the habit of speaking with a strange openness to this invisible friend. "I'm a selfish brute, and I think of myself always and of no one else besides! There are you at the other end wounded and in pain, in bad pain, I daresay, although

you make so little of it, and here am I thinking only of my own dread of being left alone!" For a moment he had a passing thought of volunteering to tramp across the Bânat to tend Burnaby in his sickness. A few months earlier he would have made the suggestion, but now his nerves had been jangled to such an extent by his perpetual apprehensions, that he dared not attempt an enterprise which he regarded as so beset with peril. The way led through wild Mûrut country such as he had never yet visited — country which Burnaby could traverse safely, but then Burnaby's influence, he told himself, was a thing apart. It took but a second for these ideas to jostle one another in his mind, and before he had finally arrived at a resolution Burnaby spoke again.

"Don't you fret about me, young 'un," he said. "I'm all right. But why in the world don't you clear out? You'll never do any good where you are—you ain't cut out for it."

"I wish I could, but I can't. You have been good to me, and I have told you all I feel, and you have never laughed at me about it, but no one else would understand. Everybody would think that it was just sheer unreasoning funk; they would point the finger of scorn at me for ever after. I couldn't stand that unless the misery of the life here had driven me quite off my head, and it won't do that while you're at Bânat. If you had to go . . . Well, God only knows what would happen to me then!"

"Well, I'm not going anyhow. Haven't I told you that I haven't even reported myself sick?"

"Yes; . . . but, Burnaby, . . . I hope, . . . I hope you'll go if you think you ought to. . . . I . . . I trust you won't let any . . . any consideration for me . . . keep you, . . . don't you know?" Even to his own ears the halting words rang false, and he cursed himself for a cur. The thin, quavering laugh—so unlike any sound that usually came from Burnaby's lips—dribbled along the wire.

"Don't be afraid, I won't leave you. But tell me how you have been getting on. I had rather listen than talk this evening. Is the heart of Kalamantan still giving you jim-jams?"

"It's awful, Burnaby, awful. Don't laugh at me! Those walls of mountain shutting me in take the heart out of me—they seem to choke me, to cut me off from the living. I'm damned before my time. All day long I look at them ringing me round pitilessly, with that glaring green plain dancing under the heat-haze, and the little spurs of hill running into it as though they were poking mocking fingers at me in derision! Don't you feel it too?"

"Can't say I do. I take the world as God made it, and the natives as the devil made them. It's the easier way. But I think I can understand, and I wish to heaven I could help you! Can't you pull yourself together and buck up a bit? Your trouble is all imaginary,

if you could only bring yourself to believe it."

"That's what the Christian scientists say of pain, but the pain is there none the less. The thing is so real to me that half the time I have to hold on with both hands to save myself from screaming!"

Far into the night, Gervase Fornier sat pouring out his thoughts and feelings to his friend, and words of encouragement and comfort filtered through the wire from Burnaby. It was an unspeakable relief to the overwrought youngster to be able to put his trouble into words. The mental agony from which he suffered filled every cranny of his mind, haunted him by day and by night, was fast winning upon him a grip like that of a monomania. He no longer reasoned about it. It was an *idée fixe*, a tangible fact, unquestioned, insistent, overwhelming. As he spoke of it at length, it shook him with an irresistible tremor as a terrier shakes a rat.

At the other end of the wire a gaunt man, of a livid paleness, the effect of which was heightened by a patch of hectic colour on either cheek, lay in a long chair, with the telephone instrument fixed convenient to his reach, listening to the confessions of the youngster whom from his heart he pitied. A bamboo spear which had been thrust through his thigh had left a festering wound, which was clumsily swathed in stained bandages. He was racked with fever, which parched his skin, making it rough and fiery hot; his eye shone with an unnatural brightness. It was the fourth day since that on which he had received his wound, and he was spent and weak; but sleep was far from him, and he was possessed by a vague, inconsequent idea that his first duty was towards young Fornier, the man whom he had never seen, whom he but partially understood, whom he had begun by despising and ended by loving after a fashion which even to himself he owned to be inexplicable. His feeling for the boy was of the kind which not infrequently animates a strong nature when it is brought into close contact with one which needs its support. Pity and contempt were strangely blended: he had at first been interested by a personality so unlike his own, had encouraged the confidences which had opened to him a sight of the other's soul; and now he had learned to feel in a measure responsible for Gervase, though the latter was bound to him by no recognisable tie. He had of late even tried to make excuses for Fornier, had sought to convince himself against his better judgment that there was grit at the bottom of the other's character if it could only be brought to light, and in this connection he had welcomed the boy's explanation of the dread of contempt which kept him at his post in spite of his fears, and the half-hearted efforts which Fornier had made to urge him to report himself sick. A long river joined Bânat to the east coast, and by its means Burnaby could make his

way without much difficulty to the haunts of civilised men. Fornier knew this, and his friend taught himself to believe that in making the suggestion that he should avail himself of the means of retreat open to him, the youngster had performed an act of something not unlike heroism. And perhaps Burnaby was right.

Right or wrong, however, the fact that the suggestion had been made only served to confirm the sick man in his resolution not to desert the panic-stricken boy. He was a lonely man whom Fate had exiled while yet young to a God-forgotten corner of the world, where for years he had lived apart from folk of his own race and colour. Like many who are endowed with big natures, Burnaby had great potentialities of affection, but his life had been of a kind which pent up these possibilities within his heart, and now, when the presence of a weaker spirit had let loose the flood-gates, the love which surpasseth the love of woman—an emotion as unaccountable, as illogical, and as inconsequent as ever was the love of a man for a maid—bound him to the boy, whose face he did not even know by sight, with a protecting sympathy which bodily suffering itself was powerless to weaken.

Each night the telephone bore words of comfort from Burnaby to Gervase, and the latter hung upon them more eagerly than ever before. Hitherto Burnaby had always seemed a little hard in his intercourse with the younger man. He had jested about his fears, had shown so brave a front himself that the other was often humiliated by the contrast which his own pusillanimity presented to his friend's cool and effortless courage, and at times Gervase had felt that Burnaby almost lost patience with him, with his unchanging melancholy and lack of self-confidence. But now, of a sudden, a softer element seemed to have entered into this unusual intercourse. Burnaby abandoned the harsh, almost brutal tone which he had been accustomed to use, which he had hoped, perhaps, would help to stiffen the other's feebleness, and in this gentler mood he spoke of himself and of his own feelings and griefs as he had never done before. In words which rang true, albeit they were curt and shy, he told Gervase of the only romance which had entered into his loveless life, of the boy-and-girl engagement which had never been able to win parental approval, that had made the first days of his exile so bitter to him. Every man east of Suez who is doomed to a lonely life cherishes somewhere at the back of his heart the memory of a girl at home, often blurred by time, often buried deeply beneath the sods which years of an ugly life have dumped down upon its grave, but lurking there none the less, and rising ever and anon to haunt and torture like a mocking wraith of a dear one dead. Few men amongst us speak of these things, though each of us knows by introspection the existence of

his fellows' secret, and men like Burnaby — men with strong, deep natures—are more reticent than any. But now, weakened by illness and loss of blood, and suffering from the semi-delirium of fever, the long habit of silence and self-repression dropped from him, and Gervase Fornier, the man of strong imagination well able to picture visions unseen but conjured into being by a chance word, sat at the other end of the telephone, and listened with eager sympathy to his friend's most sacred confidences as they came to him whispered over miles and miles of forest, mountain, and plain.

The simple story, so roughly phrased, so deeply felt, awakened memories in Gervase also, and the mere interchange of confidences so intimate drew the two men together, making each conscious of a nearer tie, a stronger sentiment of affection each for each than they had hitherto been aware of. As he listened Gervase thought with a sort of wonder of the courage and endurance of this man who, during all the months that he had known him, had always been the same brave, cheering, confidence-creating friend, never melancholy, never dispirited, seemingly never cast down by failure, or driven half-mad by exile and solitude, who yet had cherished all the while the memory of a sorrow which to him was as real, as poignant as it had been in the days when it was freshly come upon him. What a man Burnaby was! What a born leader! One whom men would follow living, would die for, perhaps, to save him from the death-agony! The shallowness, the futility, of his own character smote him by its contrast. For a space Gervase's hatred of himself filled him with shame, goaded him to fight against his weakness, his fears.

Next day Gervase went about his stockade with a new air of confidence, gave his orders sharply and imperatively, and was surprised to see them obeyed at the jump. He was trying to be more like Burnaby.

The next evening the telephone was rung on as usual.

"I'm not going to talk much to-night," said Burnaby.

"Won't you give us a tune?"

"I'll try."

Presently the nasal tones of an accordion came twanging over the wire, and Gervase sat listening with a full heart. The instrument was a good one of its kind, but accordions are not the most musical things in the world, and you or I would not have listened to the discordant sounds for many seconds. But up here in the heart of Kalamantan it was different. Even an accordion can speak a message of melody to ears that have not hearkened to European music for months which seem like years; and as the old tunes —"the tunes that make you choke and blow your nose"— came sobbing over the wire, they conjured up dead days, careless, sunny, happy, well-beloved, with a vividness like that produced by the half-faded scent we light upon by chance.

It had a weird effect this music from afar speaking to the lonely youngster in the wilder-

ness which was his prison-house, but the weirdness would have been intensified could any mortal eye have beheld the musician. He was stretched upon a rude bed which had been dragged to the mouth of the telephone, and was clothed only in a loose jacket and the wide native waist-skirt we call a *sârong*. In the few days which had elapsed since last we saw him, his whole face seemed to have fallen inwards. There were great hollows about his temples, deep caverns beneath his prominent cheek-bones; his eyes, burning with fever, looked out of sockets which were like wells; his forehead and brow were bossy with bony excrescences; his chin was covered with a stubble of unshaved hair; the hands which held the accordion were mere bunches of bone bound together by tangles of vein and sinew; his arms and legs were wasted till they had the appearance of slim sticks, brittle and sharp, with unsightly swollen lumps where the joints bulged beneath the taut skin. His eyes were terrible to look upon, filled with an unnatural brightness, restlessly roaming about the squalid room as though seeking some means of escape from present suffering, glaring from out their deeply sunken pits like wild things caged and fierce. He played with palpable effort, panting a little with the exertion, and still the old tunes wailed and sobbed, bearing their message of consolation to Gervase sixty miles away. Suddenly, in the middle of a bar, the instrument fell from Burnaby's hands and slipped on to the floor with a discordant clash.

"I won't play any more to-night, . . . I'm . . . not in the . . . vein," he panted down the telephone. "I'm sorry, . . . old . . . man. Keep your . . . pecker . . . up. Good . . . night, and . . . God bless you!" And the telephone was rung off. "I shall have to leave the poor little beggar alone after all!" Burnaby said to himself as he lay limply on his pillows. "God help him! I've stayed with him as long as I could, anyhow!"

An hour later the telephone bell in Gervase's room tinkled through the stillness. He leaped out of bed and ran to it at once.

"Is that you, Burnaby?"

An answer came back in Malay, the speaker's voice tripping and stumbling with excitement.

"Ya Allah, Tûan," it cried. "Our Tûan is dead!"

Fornier reeled back against the wall as though a crushing blow had smitten him between the eyes. Burnaby dead! He could not believe it. Why, he had spoken of his wound as a scratch. He had not even reported himself sick! It was only a few moments ago that he had been speaking, playing the accordion! Why had he concealed the fact of his illness? And then Gervase was shaken by a great tremor. In an instant the conviction was borne in upon him irresistibly that Burnaby had done this thing, had sacrificed his life, to save him from solitude, from

the companionship of his own paltry fears. The splendour of his friend's self-denial, of the strength which had made it possible for him to do so noble a deed, dazzled the youngster's mental vision, robbing him for a space of the power of thought, and then his mind regained its balance and he loathed himself. This had been done for him—for him! A creature so abject, so worthless, so weak, that the other had feared to leave him alone lest he should lose his reason, and had offered up his own life as a sacrifice in a vain attempt to aid him! The bare thought turned him physically sick, made him long to blot himself out of the universe as a thing of infinite defilement, whose continued existence besmirched the surface of a clean world, made him desire from the bottom of his being to do anything, anything, no matter how desperate, that might be in a measure an expiation, an atonement for what he felt was a crime of his committing!

In the past he had often pictured what would be his sensations were Burnaby to die and leave him, but his fancy had never painted anything like this. His fears had then been all for himself—fear of the infinite loneliness, of the ghastly folk whose villages pent him in, of the life which oppressed him so sorely with its weight of misery. But now all these things were forgotten, or rather had sunk into complete insignificance. What cared he for isolation? What mattered the risk of death at the hands of squalid savages, now that Burnaby had died for him, and in so doing had brought home to him the full measure of his own wretched weakness and lack of courage? Why should he any longer dread death now that he had seen his own soul in all its nakedness, and had learned to fear life while the memory clung to him? And Burnaby! . . . Burnaby! What a friend he had been, what a man, what a tower of strength! Little memories of the dead man's kindness and patience came to his mind and set the apple lumping in his throat, and the hard tears gathering to his eyes. Only an instant was needed for all these emotions to rush in tumult through his mind, and a second later he became aware that the voice at the other end of the telephone was still speaking to him.

"What is that you say?" Gervase cried.

"We folk are sore afraid," answered the Voice. "The wild Mûruts of the interior will surely get word of the death of the Tûan, and since they feared him greatly, they will of a certainty try to obtain portions of his body from which to fashion their magic medicines. We be few and these accursed Mûruts be many; moreover, we no longer have the Tûan with us to keep them in awe. The villages be sore at heart, the matter of the mulcting and the hangings being an open wound between us now that the Tûan be dead, and they will certainly

raid us. Hath the Tûan any order?"

Then Gervase Fornier's new-found manhood came to his aid. His words rang adown the wire firm and imperative, and the Malay, recognising the tone of the master, listened humbly, and never so much as dreamed of disobeying,

"Bury the body within the walls of the block-house, and keep watch and ward over the grave both by day and by night until I come. I will start with the dawn, and in six days I shall be with you. Do you hear?"

"Yes, Tûan."

"And hark ye, I'll have the skin off the back of any man amongst ye who sleeps on his post, and the life of one and all if aught of ill befalleth Tûan Bambi's body ere I arrive. Do you hear?"

"Yes, Tûan."

"It is well. Then do my bidding and fail not, as ye value whole skins."

"Yes, Tûan," and the telephone was rung off.

His resolution to cross the dangerous zone of wild Mûrut country had been taken in a moment, but Gervase never faltered. His belief in the danger of such a journey was as firm as of old, but his whole attitude towards peril had undergone a change. What cared he now if his end came to him in an ugly guise, so that he died in an attempt to serve the man who had been faithful to him even unto death?

At dawn, accompanied by ten Dyaks, Gervase Fornier set out upon his march. His way led eastwards, and the barrier of mountains, crowned by a pale glory of the faint pinks and yellows of a tropical sunrise, stood out prominently before him like a vast host of gigantic enemies calmly awaiting his assault. All day he plodded doggedly onwards across the glaring plain, the sun beating down pitilessly from a cloudless sky, scorching his arms and neck and face, blistering his back even through his flannel shirt, and making his eyes swim and ache. At sundown he camped at the foot of the mountains in a Mûrut village, and slept the sleep of exhaustion, which is sounder than the slumber of the just, in spite of the rows of blackened skulls which grinned at him, winking in the dim torchlight from the beams overhead. The hideous trophies bore to him their threatening message no less surely than of old, but it was a message which had lost its meaning. Since Burnaby had died for him life was a more awful thing than death.

The next day he began the ascent of the mountains. The track ran through the foothills, climbing, as is the habit of native-made paths, up to the top of every summit and then dropping sheer down in a headlong pitch to the hot, moist valley below. It was like crawling up and down a switchback unaided by momentum in the descents or by gathered impetus on the upward grades. In many places the grass under foot was sun-dried till it was as slippery as ice; in others rude steps which had been

hacked in the hillside to aid the climber had been washed away by the rains of the last wet season, and Gervase found himself confronted by a blank slope of landslip up which he had to fight every inch of his way, clinging to the bare earth with hands and feet, now sliding back half-a-dozen paces, his shoes filled with gravel, now clinging to the sheer surface panting for breath, now creeping slowly forward again. Then would come a mile or two of track running along the slope of a larger hill, and Gervase would be forced to walk on the side of his feet in order to maintain his equilibrium, until every muscle was racked with cramp.

But this day's march and that which followed it were ease and comfort exemplified when compared with the ascent of the big mountains which lay beyond the foothills. Here for an hour at a time the track would run steadily skywards at a grade of one foot ascended in every three feet of distance traversed, the climbers using the knotted roots of trees and shrubs as a rude staircase, up which they mounted painfully. Gervase could feel his heart beating against his ribs like a sledge-hammer, and every now and then it would leap up into his gullet, turning him sick and faint. The Dyaks trailed after him panting loudly, and the Mûrut bearers, bent double beneath their loads, whistled shrilly through their noses, which is the fashion of gasping for breath employed by these strange people. At times the task seemed impossible of accomplishment, the track endless, the pitiless ascent an eternal punishment inflicted for unforgivable sin. Heat, thirst, exhaustion, the painful drawing of breath which came unreadily, the Sisyphus-like effort of propelling a dead weight up a mountain-side to no apparent end, combined to torture Gervase Fornier; but still he struggled on from daybreak to sundown, giving no rest to himself or to his followers, doggedly bearing everything for the sake of the love and duty which he owed to his dead friend. And at every turn of the way, when most spent with exhaustion, when most nearly heart-broken by continuous efforts, the memory of Burnaby nerved and encouraged him afresh. A little pied water-wagtail flitted on ahead of Gervase as he climbed the mountain-side, alighting here and there with its tail seesawing restlessly, skimming on again for a short distance with a flirt of tiny feathers, looking back at the labouring travellers, waiting for them, and seeming to encourage them to fresh exertions. In Gervase's over-wrought mind the notion awoke that this bird was in a manner the incarnation of his friend. Dimly he was aware that the idea was incongruous, absurd; but none the less the conceit pleased him, made him feel less lonely, and once he even spoke aloud to the little flitting thing, half deceiving himself into the belief that Burnaby could hear him. Over-exertion in a tropical land reacts upon the mind,

and saner men than Fornier have cherished notions quite as wild when their bodies have been overtaxed.

It was not until late in the afternoon of the fifth day that the little band of wayfarers found themselves approaching Bânat through a wilderness of virgin forest. They had covered the distance in a day less than they had expected, and the wild Mûruts of the villages through which they had passed had not attempted to do them any injury. None the less, the Dyaks had reported to Fornier that there were rumours of trouble current among the people, that men said that a band of wild folk from the interior had gone upon the war-path and were meditating an attack upon the stockade, which was no longer rendered an object of fear to them by the presence of the man they had so long been accustomed to respect and dread. At any earlier period of his existence such news would have thrilled him with horror and fear. Now it thrilled him indeed, but merely with excitement, and a kind of wild joy because the chance was to be offered to him of doing something for Burnaby, of carrying on the dead man's work, of saving all that was left of him from desecration and insult. Once or twice when a couple of naked Mûruts slipped noiselessly out of the forest close at his elbow, his heart stood still, but his hand flew to his revolver, and he knew that he had no thought save of fighting manfully. This strengthened his new-born self-confidence, making him feel as though he at last had found a foothold upon something solid in his nature, and the triumph over his weakness warmed him with a curious sensation of pleasure. Burnaby would not think so badly of him if he could see him now; and, who knows, perhaps the dead can fathom the working of the minds of those they have left behind them. The notion nerved him afresh, and he stepped forward confidently as he neared the dangerous zone about the stockade.

Bânat itself stands in a little opening in the forest on the banks of a big river, but the track which Gervase was following leads thither through half-a-dozen smaller clearings encircled by jungle. It was into one of the least of these open spaces that Gervase Fornier came suddenly as the sun was sinking, the jungle throwing long shadows across the rank grass, the slanting rays from the west gilding the white stems and trunks which fenced the clearing on its eastern side. In a moment he was aware of a crowd of squalid creatures leaping to their feet, their naked brown bodies flecked by sunlight, their eyes glinting through tangles of frowsy hair, their limbs thrown this way and that in grotesque attitudes. Then of a sudden half-a-dozen explosions sounded in Gervase's ear, half-a-dozen little puffs of smoke leaped out from the mob of savage creatures and hung immovable in the still air, wild war-whoops echoed through the

forest. Before he had had time to forecast risks or imagine dangers, long before he had had time to feel afraid, before, in fact, he was aware of what he was doing, Gervase Fornier had rushed forward headlong into the crowd of Mûruts, his six-shooter spitting like a wild-cat. He saw first one savage face, distorted with excitement, and then another, break up in a sort of splash as of a puddle into which a stone is cast violently; he fired at a brown back making for the forest in panic-stricken flight, and two arms were thrown heavenwards as the figure pitched forward limply and lay still; he saw his Dyaks with their long knives out dealing awful deaths on all sides of him; and then, as suddenly as its peace had been broken, silence fell upon the clearing once more, and he was standing there, throbbing with a wild excitement, panting loudly, a smoking revolver in his hand. And, with a kind of dazed wonder, he told himself that he had felt no fear; that he had not even had a thought of serving Burnaby by attacking the Mûruts who had fired upon him; that he had acted as he had done from sheer instinct, and that he had been conscious only of a furious rage against the enemy which had held him like a possession. Marred bodies lay around him sprawling grotesquely among the rank growths, and from three of these he had torn the souls with his own hand, fighting for his life with an intoxication of joy in his heart such as he had never experienced before. And in a moment it flashed upon his mind that never again would it be possible for him to feel afraid of Mûruts or of any other natives. The conscious superiority of the white races over the brown had come to him suddenly with absolute conviction—had come to stay. Gervase Fornier's new-born manhood had been baptised in blood.

The Dyaks, wild with excitement, were gathered in a mob talking and laughing, making a hum as of disturbed bees in a hive. As Gervase stood there one of them spoke to him in Malay.

"Ah, Tûan," he said, "in very truth thou art a brave man. I was filled with fear when I beheld thee rush headlong into the mob of Mûrut men, and I had no choice but to follow. Even Tûan Bambi fought not in such wise. We folk love well to follow such a man as thou art!"

And the recognition by the brown man of the one virtue which all folk prized more than aught else thrilled Gervase Fornier strangely, and sent the blood pulsing through his veins and flushing his cheek.

How Gervase Fornier started the next day upon a raid into the interior, whence the Mûruts who had attacked him had come; how he returned after many days accompanied by 300 cowed natives bending under the loads of jars which represented the fines inflicted upon

them for their attempt to break the Government's peace; how he kept them with him until each man among them had carried up a hundred large stones from the river-bed and piled them on the grave where Burnaby's bones were laid to rest; how that huge pyramid, which was the surest protection against insult that could be afforded to the dead, became in time the centre round which clustered half the superstitions of the valley,—are not these things written in the records of Kalamantan, and in the memory of certain Mûruts, now most orderly and exemplary members of society, who fear with a great fear, and, drunk or sober, swear by the very toe-nails of "Tuan Fornieh"?

Later the second in command came up-country to Bânat to inquire into recent events, and returned to the capital to make his report in person to the chief.

"You can't do better than let young Fornier have sole charge up there," he said. "He has got a grip on the people which is worth all the science of government in the world, and I doubt whether we shall have any trouble there for ages. I can't understand it. The boy is completely changed. The work has made a man of him."

"Didn't I tell you that it was the only chance of making anything of him?" said the chief. He liked to cultivate a reputation for infallibility, though his grounds for it were not more sure than those of his neighbours. "You see I was right. The heart of Kalamantan has turned a waster into a good officer!"

But to my thinking the heart of Kalamantan would have been powerless to do anything had it not been for the heart of poor Tom Burnaby, by whose rude grave Gervase Fornier sits evening after evening, careless of an unprotected back, talking silently to the dead as though he still lived, and telling to him again and again the story of his gratitude.

The heart of Kalamantan can have no solitude for him while his friend lies so near at hand.

PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD.[1]

In the Goupil volumes the reader has a double aid to the interpretation of history, for each is a portrait-gallery as well as a study, and in the contemporary delineation of features there is, as Carlyle thought, a surer guide to character and conduct than in an acre of documents. As we turn the leaves of this sumptuous book, the futile history of Jacobitism stares at us from the plates as well as from the text. There is James with his thin beautiful Stuart face, his kind mouth, his shifty eyes; there are the princesses of the House, plump and ponderous; Henry, the true *dévot*, has a weak refinement alien to his race; while in the many portraits of Charles it is hard to find the Stuart features at all. His is a Sobieski face, from the charming boyish paintings to the last melancholy miniature. A full oval, a delicate high colour, bright hazel eyes—it is a countenance without obvious weakness, but lacking masterfulness and gravity,—the face of the adventurer, chevalier, and man of fashion, for ladies to sigh after and men to follow, but assuredly not created for the overturning of government and iron discipline of war. In this gallery of shadows Mr Lang tells his mournful story, and tells it with such sympathy and grace and honesty as to make the book final of its kind. For we are travelling far from the atmosphere in which the Jacobite wars were fought, and in a few years that strife in the mist will seem to us a dull and inexplicable affair. It is unlikely that any future historian will be able to write its history with modern accuracy and yet preserve the glamour. For this is Mr Lang's achievement. He has laboured to construct from pamphlets and manuscripts the true story of Prince Charles's life, and at the same time he has written the history of Jacobitism, that war of opposing nationalities, of different civilisations, of feudalism and whiggery, which was only accidentally connected with the Stuarts. The work suits Mr Lang's genius. His singular grace of style finds full scope, and his judicious and sympathetic temper makes the book charming as literature and valuable as history. His one fault is that he is apt now and again to fall into his old habit of recording different views without attempting to reconcile them and weave the whole into a coherent narrative. It is a fault which removes all suspicion of partisanship, but is apt to leave the narrative at times rather history in solution than history.

The story of Jacobitism can best be told by weaving it round the life of its most conspicuous

[1] Prince Charles Edward. By Andrew Lang. London: Goupil & Co.

figure. But it must be remembered that Charles, though the central figure, was not the sole, or indeed the most important, cause of the movement. It was a complex business, built up of many subtle instincts which had been long waiting in the North. It was the last assertion of a separate national existence in the smaller country. It was the last word of feudalism and the middle ages, partly in favour of exploded ideals, but partly on behalf of a real theory of politics. Medievalism and tradition against a bald eighteenth-century rationalism, the little organisation against the big, nationality against interest, the eternal Tory against the eternal Whig, the old coloured side of Scots life as against monotonous Presbyterian ideals,—such is a little part of the meaning of the '45. And to the strife of powers which he could never comprehend, there enters in the orthodox fashion the Fairy Prince from over-seas—a dazzling figure, but intangible and unpractical in his very charm. It is Mr Lang's greatest claim to our admiration that in the sober texture of his book he has this strand of pure romance. He has succeeded, rightly and intentionally, in giving his story something of the atmosphere of a fairy tale. "A nature kindly but never strong," he calls the Prince, but one to be remembered "as the centre and inspirer of old chivalrous loyalty, as one who would have brought back a lost age, an impossible realm of dreams." "His kingdom is not of this world," wrote a French lady; and while we speak the painful truth about Charles, let us remember that ardour of the spirit and that generous daring which become so tragic in their decay.

In 1745 the hope of Jacobitism was to all intents a thing of the past. The '15 was a feasible enterprise grossly mismanaged, and while Charles XII. of Sweden lived there was some chance of a foreign alliance to upset the shaky Hanoverian throne. But in the thirty years' interval things had changed in England and abroad. The Presbyterian Lowlands of Scotland had had time to forget their grievances and settle into a humdrum content, and the national party were as owls in the desert. The Jacobites in England were too comfortably settled, like Moab, upon their lees, to do more than toast the White Rose. In a letter of Charles, dated in the September of 1745, he told his English adherents that they would be inexcusable before God and man if they deserted him. "But," says Mr Lang, "they went on hunting and drinking healths, when Beaufort should have raised the West, when Cheshire and Wales should have risen, and Sir John Hinde-Cotton, M.P., should have called out the sentimentalists of the City." Religion could no longer be made use of. Charles was a Catholic and a tolerant one, but had he been a Protestant and a bigot it would have made small difference to his cause. A conversion to the Episcopal creed would have still further estranged the Low-

land Whigs and lost him the Catholics; while a change to Presbytery would have pleased nobody. What the Cameronians thought of Charles is seen from a pamphlet, 'The Active Testimony of True Presbyterians,' where he is abused in unmeasured terms and then accused, as a crowning charge, of "a foolish Pity and Leniency in sparing the profane blasphemous red coats, . . . when by putting them to death, the poor land might have been eased of the heavy burden of these Vermin of Hell." Indeed his position was untenable from the first, unless there had been enough of Squire Western's "honest Frenchmen" to install and maintain him by force. The Highlands and Lowlands had many grievances, but no sufficiently large party had one which could be cured by the restoration of the Stuarts. The war, to be sure, when it came, was a war of opposing interests, but they were not the interests of nations but of cliques, even of individuals. And so we are forced to the old conclusion that the rising was in the first instance an affair of sentiment. Its origin lay in the intrigues of certain Jacobite diplomats—notably that sinister Tweeddale laird, Mr John Murray of Broughton, and his Highland counterpart, Mr Drummond of Balhaldy,—and it owed its strength to old loyalties. Murray and the English defeat at Fontenoy decided Charles, and after the fashion of his self-willed family he did not turn back. A sentiment in favour of the exiled house, the Royal clan, united the Catholic people of the West, the Macdonalds of Moidart and Knoydart, the Macleans, the Camerons, and the Prince's namesakes in Appin; and once the fire was kindled it naturally spread. But it was a pathetic and futile enterprise at the best, for it is now clear that there could have been no serious foreign interference, and the nation at large cared little about the matter. But for those interested in the science of hypothetics, here is a point for speculation. Had Charles been willing to make Scotland alone his kingdom, as the Chevalier Johnstone suggests, he might have been successful. He might have revived the old detestation of the Union, and stood on the defensive at the Borders, while France assisted by sea. It would have been a wild thought, but with a far-away chance of victory; while as for the other, it was a mere matter of staving off by weeks a certain disaster.

The charming little boy whom we see in the early portraits was placed from the beginning in a society little fitted to correct his natural faults. James, kind, upright, and unwise, was perpetually engaged in family squabbles or senseless fault-finding towards his adherents. The pious king was no proper guardian of a high-spirited child, and beyond the family circle there was a Jacobite society where the atmosphere was too often intrigue and dissipation. Hay's chief charge against the Chevalier Ramsay was that "two glasses of wine unhinged him," and hard drinking was an indispensable attri-

bute of loyalty. Charles was given a good, if superficial, education, and by all accounts was an affectionate son to his somewhat exacting parents. In a letter written at the age of eight he promises "to be very dutiful to mamma, and not jump too near her," which tells us much about the nerves of that unhappy lady his mother. He was very handsome, and Captain Redmond saw him with curl-papers in the morning, which Murray begged him not to tell in Dublin, lest it might be thought effeminate. But he grew up unspoiled, hating, we are told, the society of ladies and the opera, and loving golf and long winter walks with his gun. He became ambitious of military renown, and eager to strike a blow for his friends. "Had I soldiers," he says repeatedly, "I would not be here now." But for an exiled Stuart there was only one chance of service—on his own behalf, for no Court in Europe would accept his sword. The idea seems never to have left him, the land "by rights his ain" began to usurp the larger share of his thoughts, and when he was not wearing down his restlessness by violent exercise, he was scheming to bring about an enterprise which should end in a throne for his father and renown for himself. We need not enter into the many disappointments of his early manhood, the intrigues and counter-intrigues, the months of weary waiting. Always some turn in the tide was expected—England would at last show herself ready, France would at last act vigorously, and always the hope was deferred, so that when the step is at length taken it is in something like boyish despair and against the judgment of many friends. When he sailed in the Du Tellier with the "Men of Moidart"—"old allagruguous-like fellows as ever I saw," wrote Mr Bissatt—it was without certain hope of support, with a weak and distracted party, and after months of tortuous intrigue. "On no side," says Mr Lang, "was there a gleam of promise, a single omen of good."

At the Raising of the Standard the Western clans, excluding the Campbells in the South and the Macleods in the North, rallied to his side,—the great clans and some odd little remnants, such as the Mac-Ulrigs, a sept of Galloway Kennedys settled in Glengarry's country. The following increased, as the northern clans came in and the Jacobite gentlemen of the Midlands and the South heard of the rally. Take certain conditions, and joining the Prince became a matter of conscience. To the old High-Tory, High-Church, or Catholic lairds, with romantic traditions behind them of the many hopeless loyalties of the seventeenth century, not to rise for the Cause meant either a commercial eye to self-interest or a base fear for their necks. In this case it was the better Whig the worse man, and because it was largely an affair of conscience, because, save in a few instances, the Cause was not the cause of interest and prudence, we find higher types of men on the losing side. Save

in the case of Sir Peter Halket of Pitfirrane, the Whigs could show few pieces of heart-stirring gallantry. Lochiel, Pitsligo, Kingsburgh, Cluny, even Lord George Murray—they have no parallels on the other side. Lochiel in especial was the Bayard of his times—a man of enlightened culture, a soldier of skill, a type of stainless honour, compared to whom Colonel Gardiner was little more than a morose fanatic. But if certain of the leaders stand honourably forth in history, there were some whom it is well to keep at the back. Lovat, who was to be Duke of Fraser, Mr Lang calls "a bad man, a bully, a traitor from of old, vain, sentimental, and a braggart." He was also a scandalous rake, little behind Colonel Francis Charteris, and perhaps the subtlest brain in the kingdom. His real creed seems to have been a kind of belated but consistent nationalism, for he always maintained that, though he might betray the cause of the Stuarts, he was ever loyal to the cause of Scotland. There is no doubt of his treachery to the Prince, to his son, and to his friends, and yet he was loved after a fashion; and Mr Drummond of Balhaldy could write after his execution that "his country has lost one of the greatest and best patriots it had at any time, and his relations and intimate acquaintances a most faithful friend in all their necessities and wants." Of the others, Lord George is still a puzzle. Mr Lang believes him able and faithful, and if he holds a brief for any one in the book, it is for the Athole Murray. As for the second Murray, him of Broughton, he was as indisputably a man of talent as he was an arrant bodily coward. We believe that the source of his later treachery was sheer dread of hanging, that he remained faithful in spirit to the cause which he had organised, and that he sorrowed bitterly for his tragic cowardice. He had always a difficult part to perform, for he had to keep a sharp eye on treachery and checkmate it in time, knowing all the while that he had no assured position, and was himself the object of suspicion. He was one of the "little people" whom the great lords jeered at, and yet he held the purse and had the Prince's ear.

The march to Edinburgh is narrated by Mr Lang with great spirit and many picturesque details. When they came near Newliston, where lived Lord Stair, the grandson of the author of the massacre of Glencoe, the Glencoe Macdonalds claimed the right to guard the house. Meanwhile in Edinburgh the defence was conducted in a spirit of comic opera. A corps of volunteers was enlisted, but their relatives hung upon their necks; and the Kirk, in the person of Dr Wishart, abjured them by all they held sacred to bide at home. Some of the brave fellows, who seem to have been chiefly divinity students, scattered over the surrounding country and got drunk at alehouses in honour of the Protestant cause. "Two were surrounded and captured over their oysters and sherry by a Jacobite

writer's apprentice." A more preposterous company never existed. "As they marched down the sanctified bends of the Bow, a young militant minister, the reverend Mr Kinloch, said to Hew Ballantine, 'Mr Hew, Mr Hew, does not this remind you of a passage in Livy, where the Gens Fabii marched out of Rome to prevent the Gauls entering the city. You must recollect the end, Mr Hew, *Omnes ad unum periere*—'They perished to a man.'" So much for the courage of the young burghers and probationers. When Charles entered the town he was burdened with care, unlike the gay young man he afterwards became when his cause was lost and the heather was his kingdom. He was in Highland dress, wearing the garter and the white cockade, but Home thought him "languid and melancholy, more like a man of fashion than a hero." The beautiful Mrs Murray, most sad-fated of Jacobite ladies, sat on horseback at the Cross with drawn sword distributing white cockades. And then the army went east, and in a little there came news of Prestonpans, and Charles returned a conqueror. Mr Lang has told the story of the battle with great detail, in the light of the late Sir Robert Cadell's researches. He finds no reason to discredit the ordinary account of Gardiner's death, and he gives a full account of the excellent conduct of Sir Peter Halket. That gentleman first kept his company together, fired from a ditch, and got terms from his assailants; and later, when Cumberland bade the captive officers break their parole, nobly replied, "His Grace commands my commission but not my honour." The victors behaved with the utmost humanity, which was a virtue Cumberland declined to burden himself with after Culloden. The English newspapers believed that the battle was won by dogs trained to fight; and Nick Wogan or some other humourist invented a really admirable dog-story about a force of 700 Dutch at Berwick who were devoured by gigantic Orcadian hounds, who attacked to the sound of the bagpipes.

But Edinburgh was to be no continuing city for the Prince, and preparation was begun for the disastrous march to the south. Kenmure and Nithsdale remembered the '15 and retired to their own country, leaving a command for the unhappy Balmerino; while Traquair, incapable and fickle, hid, as Murray said, "his cowardly head among his own hills of Tweedail." Cluny, Tullibardine, and Lord Lewis Gordon, arrived from recruiting in the North; and Kilmarnock, high-born and desperately poor, marched after many supernatural warnings on that enterprise which was to cost him his life. It was an ill-assorted force, a "mélange de paresse fataliste," says M. Portalis, "et d'action furieuse, de résignation passive et d'audace illimitée." Mr Lang has omitted none of the picturesque accidents of the advance. At Jedburgh the father of Dandie Dinmont arrived as a recruit, but the Prince had gone and he

returned to Charlieshope. In Cheshire the last of the old Cavalier gentlewomen came to Charles, having sold her plate and jewels for the Cause. She had sent half her income yearly to James, concealing her name, and she kissed the Prince's hand, saying, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." Then came the necessary turning at Derby. Charles, with whom it was St James's or a soldier's death, would have gone on. Lord George, looking at the affair as a general, and considering the future of the army, saw the need for retreat. It was a deplorable incident, for it still further increased the disunion. Henceforth Lord George, the only competent soldier, is suspected by his master, without doubt unjustly, but not unnaturally. The character of the Rising changes in a twinkling, and from a bold stroke of invasion it becomes what Horace Walpole thought the feeblest of things, "a rebellion on the defensive." Somehow or other the army struggled back over the Border, pursued by Cumberland's dragoons, and saved only by Lord George's brilliant check at Clifton. Then came the odd fight at Falkirk, a battle as crazy as Sheriffmuir and as indecisive. The pipers, we are told, flung their pipes to their boys, and charged with the claymore, so that they could not sound the recall. Both sides won in parts of the field, but the victory was of use to neither. On the whole, Hawley showed the worse generalship, but he in turn complained of his men, the heroes of Fontenoy, and lamented that his heart was broken. But the Highlanders proceeded at once to a perfectly fatal blunder, for the chiefs, nervous and ill at ease in the South, insisted on a retreat beyond the Grampians. The retreat meant famine, the loss of much Lowland support, and time for Cumberland to recruit and train his demoralised troops. Charles protested, but his reasonable arguments fell on deaf ears, and he was compelled to join in what was less a retreat than a flight.

When the armies faced each other on Culloden Moor, Charles was compelled to oppose to a well-fed, well-trained, and much superior force a little remnant of famished and quarrelsome men. Cumberland had over 8000, excluding Campbells and militia; the Prince had scarcely 5000, for the Macphersons, Cromarties, Mackenzies, Barisdale's Macdonalds, and about half of the Frasers were absent. The officers had no food but bread and whisky; while the men slept on the wet heather and went breakfastless. Mr Lang, in his account of the battle, finds no corroboration of the common story of the conduct of the Macdonalds on the left wing. It seems that the main body of the clan were too distant from the enemy to cover the ground before the turn of the battle; but Keppoch and Scottos with their immediate followers died gallantly in the charge. Meanwhile on the right, "'like a whip of the whirlwind,' came the onslaught of Camerons, Stewarts, Mackintoshes, Frasers, and Macleans.

No more desperate or resolute attack was ever made than by these out-wearied, famished, and valiant clans." But all the fiery valour in the world could not prevail against discipline, and in a little the Prince's army had melted away, and the Prince himself was riding hard towards the blue hills to the South. It is a vext question what was Charles's conduct immediately after the battle. Mr Lang examines the matter with great thoroughness, and his verdict is unfavourable. Charles seems to have hesitated between different trysting-places, and then to have cast all to the winds and fled in ill-directed haste. Fort Augustus and Ruthven in Badenoch were named at different times as the rendezvous. Johnstone accuses Charles of breaking faith and deserting men who sacrificed all for him, but Lord George's letter from Ruthven shows that all hope was gone. The worst we can accuse the Prince of is a blind instinct of self-preservation which led him into desperate straits; for if he had gone to Loch Arkaig, as Murray and Lochiel begged him to do, he might have left for France at once and taken with him the French treasure, which proved such a snare to honest gentlemen.

The Rising was over, and the leaders went to their different fates. The Duke of Perth died on the voyage to France, whither Lochiel, Ardshiel, and Lord George escaped in the end. Murray of Broughton probably gave himself up, and became the Judas of the forlorn cause. Lovat, Balmerino, and Kilmarnock died on the scaffold, Tullibardine in prison, Strathallan on Culloden field with Keppoch and Scottos. Pitsligo and Cluny escaped by the loyalty of their friends and clansmen. Others of the Jacobites had happier fortunes. James Keith, the Earl Marischal's brother, and a son of the author of "Lady Keith's Lament," lived to lead the armies of Frederic the Great and lie in Hochekirke with the proudest of all epitaphs on his tomb. And a certain Neil MacEachain, a companion of the Prince, was the father of Napoleon's Marshal Macdonald. As for Charles, he became once more the gay and gallant prince in the heather, the hero of fairy tales. That Odyssey of the Western Isles is a better piece of romance than most story-tellers have ever woven. He was befriended by a Campbell, a Mr Donald Campbell of Scalpa, who did not hold with the politics of his clan. "He informed the Reverend Aulay Macaulay, minister of Harris and great grandfather of Lord Macaulay, who came hunting for Charles and the reward, that he would take sword in hand to defend the Prince from the clergyman and his party,"—an incident which shows the Kirk in an unpleasing light. The Prince kept up his spirits to the admiration of all his followers, showed himself an admirable cook and a noted brewer of punch, and at these rough meals used to give the toast of the "Black Eye," "by which he meant the second daughter of France." He was a capital sportsman, shooting

old chap goes on equably trusting Providence and the established order of the universe, but alive to its small dangers and its small mercies. One can almost see him, grey-haired and serene in the inviolable shelter of his book-lined, faded, and comfortable study, where for forty years he had conscientiously gone over and over again the round of his little thoughts about faith and virtue, about the conduct of life and the only proper manner of dying; where he had written so many sermons, where he sits talking to his boy, over there, on the other side of the earth. But what of the distance. Virtue is one all over the world, and there is only one faith, one conceivable conduct of life, one manner of dying. He hopes his 'dear James' will never forget that 'who once gives way to temptation, in the very instant hazards his total depravity and everlasting ruin. Therefore resolve fixedly never, through any possible motives, to do anything which you believe to be wrong.' There is also some news of a favourite dog; and a pony, 'which all you boys used to ride,' had gone blind from old age and had to be shot. The old chap invokes Heaven's blessing; the mother and all the girls then at home send their love. . . . No, there is nothing much in that yellow frayed letter fluttering out of his cherishing grasp after so many years. It was never answered, but who can say what converse he may have held with all these placid, colourless forms of men and women peopling that quiet corner of the world as free of danger or strife as a tomb, and breathing equably the air of undisturbed rectitude. It seems amazing that he should belong to it, he to whom so many things 'had come.' Nothing ever came to them; they would never be taken unawares, and never be called upon to grapple with fate. Here they all are, evoked by the mild gossip of the father, all these brothers and sisters, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, gazing with clear unconscious eyes, while I seem to see him, returned at last, no longer a mere white speck at the heart of an immense mystery, but of full stature, standing disregarded amongst their untroubled shapes, with a stern and romantic aspect, but always mute, dark — under a cloud.

"The story of the last events you shall find in the few pages enclosed here. You must admit that it is romantic beyond the wildest dreams of his boyhood, and yet there is to my mind a sort of profound and terrifying logic in it, as if it were our imagination alone that could set loose upon us the might of an overwhelming destiny. The imprudence of our thoughts recoils upon our heads; who toys with the sword shall perish by the sword. This astounding adventure, of which the most astounding part is that it is true, comes on as an unavoidable necessity. Something of the sort had to happen. You repeat this to your-

was so much the friend of England that she had forbidden the Earl Marischal her country. His thoughts seem to have been hag-ridden by the figure of Charles XII. In the heather, when whisky failed to upset him, he had called himself proudly a *tête de fer*, which was the name the Janissaries gave Charles of Sweden. So, when he was to be expelled from Paris, he proposed to imitate Charles at Bender and stand a siege in his house. Pathetic day-dreams of a Charles of Scotland who should sweep over Europe seem to have haunted his sober hours. He took seriously and resolutely to drink, the usual Nemesis of incompetent ambition. Bad women, like Miss Walkinshaw and the Princess de Talmond; good women, like Madame d'Aiguillon and Mademoiselle Ferrand, assisted in his downfall by providing an atmosphere of adulation which dulled the blunt criticism of his friends. It is a thankless task to watch the slow decay of spirit, a sad one when for this man the best blood had once been spilled like water.

The tale of those years is so sordid that one turns with relief to the little that is innocent. Charles seems to have betaken himself at times to literature, and anticipated Rousseau, whom he afterwards helped the Earl Marischal to befriend. It occurred to him that he might become a Wildman, and he left some manuscript "Maximes" for our guidance in the savage life. He corresponded with Montesquieu, who said that if Charles were not so great a prince he would secure his election to the Academy. He begs Mademoiselle Ferrand to send him 'Joseph Andrews' in English and 'Tom Jones' in French, and afterwards we find him reading 'Clarissa Harlowe.' Meantime Jacobitism at home was fast becoming a belief of the past. In 1750 he paid a flying visit to England, explored the Tower, and held a meeting in an upper chamber in Pall Mall. In 1759 he proclaimed himself a Protestant; and there were hopes of a rising under the Elibanks and a French invasion,—hopes which Hawke shattered in Quiberon Bay. Soon there was scarcely a Jacobite left even in Scotland, save the Oliphants of Gask and Bishop Forbes, who refused to believe the evil reports of the Prince. And then came the accession of George III., the young king, who was an Englishman in truth, and the last remnant of Charles's party returned to a conventional loyalty. Forgotten, impotent, haunted by regrets, going little out of doors, and rarely taking exercise, Charles, who on the heather had been a model of manly courage, descended into a premature and gluttonous old age. "De vivre et pas vivre," as he wrote, "est beaucoup pis que de mourir."

In 1766 James died and Charles returned to Italy. He married, as befitted one still signing himself "Charles R.," and the bride was a vulgar little German princess, Louise

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hopeful too—only to hear him shout, 'No. Nothing.' That was all then—and there shall be nothing more; there shall be no message, unless such as each of us can interpret for himself from the language of facts, that are so often more enigmatic than the craftiest arrangement of words. He made, it is true, one more attempt to deliver himself; but that too failed, as you may perceive if you look at the sheet of greyish foolscap enclosed here. He had tried to write; do you notice the commonplace hand? It is headed 'The Fort, Patusan.' I suppose he had carried out his intention of making out of his house a place of defence. It was an excellent plan: a deep ditch, an earth wall topped by a palisade, and at the angles guns mounted on platforms to sweep each side of the square. Doramin had agreed to furnish him the guns; and so each man of his party would know there was a place of safety, upon which every faithful partisan could rally in case of some sudden danger. All this showed his judicious foresight, his faith in the future. What he called 'my own people'—the liberated captives of the Sherif—were to make a distinct quarter of Patusan, with their huts and little plots of ground under the walls of the stronghold. Within he would be an invincible host in himself. 'The Fort, Patusan.' No date, as you observe. What is a number and a name to a day of days? It is also impossible to say whom he had in his mind when he seized the pen: Stein—myself—the world at large—or was this only the aimless startled cry of a solitary man confronted by his fate? 'An awful thing has happened,' he wrote before he flung the pen down for the first time; look at the blot shaped like the head of an arrow under these words. After a while he had tried again, scrawling heavily, as if with a hand of lead, another line. 'I must now at once . . .' The pen had spluttered, and that time he gave it up. There's nothing more; he had seen a broad gulf that neither eye nor voice could span. I can understand this. He was overwhelmed by the inexplicable; he was overwhelmed by his own personality — the gift of that destiny which he had done his best to master.

"I send you also an old letter—a very old letter. It was found carefully preserved in his writing-case. It is from his father, and by the date you can see he must have received it a few days before he joined the *Patna*. Thus it must be the last letter he ever had from home. He had preserved it all these years. The good old parson fancied his sailor-son. I've looked in at a sentence here and there. There is nothing in it except just affection. He tells his 'dear James' that the last long letter from him was very 'honest and entertaining.' He would not have him 'judge men harshly or hastily.' There are four pages of it, easy morality and family news. Tom had 'taken orders.' Carrie's husband had 'money losses.' The

hopeful too—only to hear him shout, 'No. Nothing.' That was all then—and there shall be nothing more; there shall be no message, unless such as each of us can interpret for himself from the language of facts, that are so often more enigmatic than the craftiest arrangement of words. He made, it is true, one more attempt to deliver himself; but that too failed, as you may perceive if you look at the sheet of greyish foolscap enclosed here. He had tried to write; do you notice the commonplace hand? It is headed 'The Fort, Patusan.' I suppose he had carried out his intention of making out of his house a place of defence. It was an excellent plan: a deep ditch, an earth wall topped by a palisade, and at the angles guns mounted on platforms to sweep each side of the square. Doramin had agreed to furnish him the guns; and so each man of his party would know there was a place of safety, upon which every faithful partisan could rally in case of some sudden danger. All this showed his judicious foresight, his faith in the future. What he called 'my own people'—the liberated captives of the Sherif—were to make a distinct quarter of Patusan, with their huts and little plots of ground under the walls of the stronghold. Within he would be an invincible host in himself. 'The Fort, Patusan.' No date, as you observe. What is a number and a name to a day of days? It is also impossible to say whom he had in his mind when he seized the pen: Stein—myself—the world at large—or was this only the aimless startled cry of a solitary man confronted by his fate? 'An awful thing has happened,' he wrote before he flung the pen down for the first time; look at the blot shaped like the head of an arrow under these words. After a while he had tried again, scrawling heavily, as if with a hand of lead, another line. 'I must now at once . . .' The pen had spluttered, and that time he gave it up. There's nothing more; he had seen a broad gulf that neither eye nor voice could span. I can understand this. He was overwhelmed by the inexplicable; he was overwhelmed by his own personality — the gift of that destiny which he had done his best to master.

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old chap goes on equably trusting Providence and the established order of the universe, but alive to its small dangers and its small mercies. One can almost see him, grey-haired and serene in the inviolable shelter of his book-lined, faded, and comfortable study, where for forty years he had conscientiously gone over and over again the round of his little thoughts about faith and virtue, about the conduct of life and the only proper manner of dying; where he had written so many sermons, where he sits talking to his boy, over there, on the other side of the earth. But what of the distance. Virtue is one all over the world, and there is only one faith, one conceivable conduct of life, one manner of dying. He hopes his 'dear James' will never forget that 'who once gives way to temptation, in the very instant hazards his total depravity and everlasting ruin. Therefore resolve fixedly never, through any possible motives, to do anything which you believe to be wrong.' There is also some news of a favourite dog; and a pony, 'which all you boys used to ride,' had gone blind from old age and had to be shot. The old chap invokes Heaven's blessing; the mother and all the girls then at home send their love. . . . No, there is nothing much in that yellow frayed letter fluttering out of his cherishing grasp after so many years. It was never answered, but who can say what converse he may have held with all these placid, colourless forms of men and women peopling that quiet corner of the world as free of danger or strife as a tomb, and breathing equably the air of undisturbed rectitude. It seems amazing that he should belong to it, he to whom so many things 'had come.' Nothing ever came to them; they would never be taken unawares, and never be called upon to grapple with fate. Here they all are, evoked by the mild gossip of the father, all these brothers and sisters, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, gazing with clear unconscious eyes, while I seem to see him, returned at last, no longer a mere white speck at the heart of an immense mystery, but of full stature, standing disregarded amongst their untroubled shapes, with a stern and romantic aspect, but always mute, dark — under a cloud.

"The story of the last events you shall find in the few pages enclosed here. You must admit that it is romantic beyond the wildest dreams of his boyhood, and yet there is to my mind a sort of profound and terrifying logic in it, as if it were our imagination alone that could set loose upon us the might of an overwhelming destiny. The imprudence of our thoughts recoils upon our heads; who toys with the sword shall perish by the sword. This astounding adventure, of which the most astounding part is that it is true, comes on as an unavoidable necessity. Something of the sort had to happen. You repeat this to your-

whom I could not find indoors; and I wandered out, pursued by distressful thoughts, into the gardens, these famous gardens of Stein, in which you can find every plant and tree of tropical lowlands. I followed the course of the canalised stream, and sat for a long time on a shaded bench near the ornamental pond, where some waterfowl with clipped wings were diving and splashing noisily. The branches of casuarina-trees behind me swayed lightly, incessantly, reminding me of the soughing of fir-trees at home.

"This mournful and restless sound was a fit accompaniment to my meditations. She had said he had been driven away from her by a dream,—and there was no answer one could make her—there seemed to be no forgiveness for such a transgression. And yet is not mankind itself, pushing on its blind way, driven by a dream of its greatness and its power upon the dark paths of excessive cruelty and of excessive devotion? And what is the pursuit of truth—after all?

"When I rose to get back to the house I caught sight of Stein's drab coat through a gap in the foliage, and very soon at a turn of the path I came upon him walking with the girl. Her little hand rested on his forearm, and under the broad, flat rim of his Panama hat he bent over her, grey-haired, paternal, with compassionate and chivalrous deference. I stood aside, but they stopped, facing me. His gaze was bent on the ground at his feet; the girl, erect and slight on his arm, stared sombrely beyond my shoulder with big, clear, motionless eyes. '*Schrecklich*,' he murmured. 'Terrible! Terrible! What can one do?' He seemed to be appealing to me, but her youth, the length of the days suspended over her head, appealed to me more; and suddenly, even as I realised that nothing could be said, I found myself pleading his cause for her sake. 'You must forgive him.' I concluded, and my own voice seemed to me muffled, lost in an irresponsive deaf immensity. 'We all want to be forgiven,' I added after a while.

"'What have I done?' she asked with her lips only.

"'You always mistrusted him,' I said.

"'He was like the others,' she pronounced slowly.

"'Not like the others,' I protested, but she continued evenly, without any feeling—

"'He was false.' And suddenly Stein broke in. 'No! no! no! My poor child! . . .' He patted her hand lying passively on his sleeve. 'No! no! Not false! True! true! true!' He tried to look into her stony face. 'You don't understand. Ach! Why you do not understand? . . . Terrible,' he said to me. 'Some day she *shall* understand.'

"'Will *you* explain?' I asked, looking hard at him. They moved on.

"I watched them. Her gown trailed on the path, her black hair fell loose. She walked upright and light by the side of the tall man, whose long shapeless

all. . . .' He choked again. . . . 'I expect this thing'll kill me, but I shall die easy now. You . . . you here. . . . I don't know your name—I would give you a five-pound note if—if I had it—for the news—or my name's not Brown. . . .' He grinned horribly. . . . 'Gentleman Brown.'

"He said all these things in profound gasps, staring at me with his yellow eyes out of a long, ravaged brown face; he jerked his left arm; a pepper-and-salt matted beard hung almost into his lap; a dirty ragged blanket covered his legs. I had found him out in Bankok through that busybody Schomberg, the hotelkeeper, who had, confidentially, directed me where to look. It appears that a sort of loafing, fuddled vagabond—a white man living amongst the natives with a Siamese woman—had considered it a great privilege to give a shelter to the last days of the famous Gentleman Brown. While he was talking to me in the wretched hovel, and, as it were, fighting for every minute of his life, the Siamese woman, with big bare legs and a stupid coarse face, sat in a dark corner chewing betel stolidly. Now and then she would get up for the purpose of shooing a chicken away from the door. The whole hut shook when she walked. An ugly yellow child, naked and pot-bellied like a little heathen god, stood at the foot of the couch, finger in mouth, lost in a profound and calm contemplation of the dying man.

"He talked feverishly with a gleeful ferocity and a savage unforgiving contempt for poor Jim; but in the middle of a word, perhaps, an invisible hand would take him by the throat, and he would look at me dumbly with a heaving breast and an expression of doubt and anguish. You could see his coarse lips turn blue behind the drooping, wiry hairs. He seemed to fear that I would get tired of waiting for the end of the choking-fit and go away, leaving him with his tale untold, with his exultation unexpressed. Nothing was farther from my thoughts; I was only afraid that death, hovering over him, would swoop down suddenly and baffle my desire to know. He died during the night, I believe, but by that time I had nothing more to learn.

"I knew the story before, of course; he had only cleared up an obscure point, though the profound blackness of the act cannot be dispelled.

"So much as to Brown, for the present.

"Eight months before this, coming into Samarang, I went as usual to see Stein. On the garden side of the house a Malay on the verandah greeted me shyly, and I remembered that I had seen him in Patusan, in Jim's house, amongst other Bugis men who used to come in the evening to talk interminably over their war reminiscences and to discuss State affairs. Jim had pointed him out to me once as a respectable petty trader owning a small seagoing native craft, who had showed himself 'one of the best at the

taking of the stockade.' I was not very surprised to see him, since any Patusan trader venturing as far as Samarang would naturally find his way to Stein's house. I returned his greeting and passed on. At the door of Stein's room I came upon another Malay in whom I recognised Tamb' Itam.

"I asked him at once what he was doing there; it occurred to me that Jim might have come on a visit. I own I was pleased and excited at the thought. Tamb' Itam looked as if he did not know what to say. 'Is Tuan Jim inside?' I asked impatiently. 'No,' he mumbled, hanging his head for a moment, and then with sudden earnestness, 'He would not fight. He would not fight,' he repeated twice. As he seemed unable to say anything else, I pushed him aside and went in.

"Stein, tall and stooping, stood alone in the middle of the room between the rows of butterfly cases. 'Ach! is it you, my friend?' he said sadly, peering through his glasses. A drab sack-coat of alpaca hung, unbuttoned, down to his knees. He had a Panama hat on his head, and there were deep furrows on his pale cheeks. 'What's the matter now?' I asked nervously. 'There's Tamb' Itam there. . . .' 'Come and see the girl. Come and see the girl. She is here,' he said, with a half-hearted show of activity. I tried to detain him, but with gentle obstinacy he would take no notice of my eager questions. 'She is here, she is here,' he repeated, in great perturbation. 'They came here two days ago. An old man like me, a stranger—*sehen sie*—can not do much. . . . Come this way. . . . Young hearts are unforgiving. . . .' I could see he was in utmost distress. . . . 'The strength of life in them, the cruel strength of life. . . .' He mumbled, leading me round the house; I followed him, lost in dismal and angry conjectures. At the door of the drawing-room he barred my way. 'He loved her very much,' he said interrogatively, and I only nodded, feeling so bitterly disappointed that I would not trust myself to speak. 'Very frightful,' he murmured. 'She can't understand me. I am only a strange old man. Perhaps you . . . she knows you. Talk to her. We can't leave it like this. Tell her to forgive him. It was very frightful.' 'No doubt,' I said, exasperated at being in the dark; 'but have *you* forgiven him?' He looked at me queerly. 'You shall hear,' he said, and opening the door, absolutely pushed me in.

"You know Stein's big house and the two immense reception-rooms, uninhabited and uninhabitable, clean, full of solitude and of shining things that look as if never beheld by the eye of man? They are cool on the hottest days, and you enter them as you would a scrubbed cave underground. I passed through one, and in the other I saw the girl sitting at the end of a big mahogany table, on which she rested her head, the face hidden in her arms.

of Stolberg by name, who was never in love with her husband. He was probably cruel to her, but historians have been too ready to assume that because the King drank the fault was all on his side. She was the Ideal Woman to Alfieri, a second-rate playwright and an undeniable cad, and ultimately eloped with her lover. Charles's brain seems to have been a little touched in consequence of his habits, but in the late evening of his life there is a flickering revival of his old self. He legitimated his daughter by Miss Walkinshaw, made her Duchess of Albany, and had her to keep house for him. The Duchess Charlotte, the "Bonny lass o' Albany," whom Burns sang, and a kind, cheery woman from her portraits, imparts a shade of decency into those latter years. Memories of Scotland used to come back to the old King; he loved the sound of the bagpipes, and visitors had to be warned not to mention the '45 and the Highlands. When he died in the January of 1788, "the contemporary lament," Mr Lang says, "was left for an obscure Highland bard to chant, in Gaelic verse, that unconsciously reproduces the imagery of the Greek lament for Bion. The King would not have had it otherwise. Untrue to himself, untrue to many a friend, his heart was constant to his Highlanders."

Charles died on the very eve of the Revolution. A few years and the institutions of Europe were to be flung into the crucible, from which none could emerge unchanged. And there is something apposite in the juxtaposition, for in a way he typified the old world of worn-out loyalties and blind faiths which had survived throughout the rationalist eighteenth century and was to find its revenge and its justification in the equally crude and blind beliefs which were born of the Revolution. It is to this that he owes his significance in history, but it is to something else that he owes his place in the memories of his countrymen. They have forgotten his frailties, and remember him only as the fairy prince, the incarnation of youth and the eternal Quixotic which, happily for Scotland, lies at the back of all her thrift and worldly prudence. Miss Fiona Macleod in a recent book has written in eloquent words of this, the inner meaning of the undying Jacobite romance:—

"In a Highland cottage I heard some time ago a man singing a lament for 'Tearlach Og Aluinn,' Bonnie Prince Charlie; and when he ceased tears were on the face of each that was there, and in his own throat a sob. I asked him, later, was the heart really so full of the Prionnsa Ban, but he told me that it was not him he was thinking of, but of all the dead men and women of Scotland who had died for his sake, and of Scotland itself, and of the old days that would not come again. I did not ask what old days, for I knew that in his heart he lamented his own dead hopes and dreams, and that the prince was but the image of his lost youth, and that the world was old and grey because of his own weariness and his own grief."

LORD JIM: A SKETCH.[1]

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WITH these words Marlow had ended his narrative, and his audience had broken up forthwith, under his abstract, pensive gaze. Men drifted away in pairs or alone without loss of time, without offering a remark, as if the last image of that incomplete story, its incompleteness itself, and the very tone of the speaker, had made discussion vain and comment impossible. Each of them seemed to carry away his own impression, to carry it away with him like a secret; but there was only one man of these listeners who was ever to hear the last word of the story. It came to him at home, more than two years later, and it came contained in a thick packet addressed in Marlow's upright and angular handwriting.

The privileged man opened the packet, looked in, then, laying it down, went to the window. His rooms were in the highest flat of a lofty building, and his glance could travel afar beyond the clear panes of glass, as though he were looking out of the lantern of a lighthouse. The slopes of the roofs glistened, the dark broken ridges succeeded each other without end like sombre, uncrested waves, and from the depths of the town under his feet ascended a confused and unceasing mutter. The spires of churches, numerous, scattered haphazard, uprose like beacons on a maze of shoals without a channel; the driving rain mingled with the falling dusk of a winter's evening; and the booming of a big clock on a tower striking the hour, rolled past in voluminous, austere bursts of sound, with a shrill vibrating cry at the core. He drew the heavy curtains.

The light of his shaded reading-lamp slept like a sheltered pool, his footfalls made no sound on the carpet, his wandering days were over. No more horizons as boundless as hope, no more twilights within the forests as solemn as temples, in the hot quest for the Ever-undiscovered Country over the hill, across the stream, beyond the wave. The hour was striking! No more! No more!—but the opened packet under the lamp brought back the sounds, the visions, the very savour of the past—a multitude of fading faces, a tumult of low voices, dying away upon the shores of distant seas under a passionate and unconsoling sunshine. He seemed to listen to it, then sighed and sat down to read.

At first he saw three distinct

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sail in company towards Zamboanga. On the way, for some reason or other, both vessels had to come-to off one of these new Spanish settlements — which never came to anything in the end—where there was not only a civil official in charge on shore, but a good stout coasting schooner lying at anchor in the little bay; and this craft, in every way much better than his own, Brown made up his mind to steal.

"He was down on his luck—as he told me himself. The world he had bullied for twenty years with fierce, aggressive disdain, had yielded him nothing in the way of material advantage except a small bag of silver dollars, which was concealed in his cabin so that 'the devil himself couldn't smell it out.' And that was all —absolutely all. He was tired of his life, and not afraid of death. But this man, who would stake his existence on a whim with a bitter and jeering recklessness, was mortally afraid of a prison. He had an unreasoning cold-sweat, nerve-shaking, blood-to-water-turning sort of horror at the bare possibility of being locked up—the sort of fear a superstitious man would feel at the thought of being embraced by a spectre. Therefore the civil official who came on board to make a preliminary investigation into the capture, investigated arduously all day long, and only went ashore after dark, muffled up in a cloak, and taking great care not to let Brown's dollars clink in their bag. Afterwards, being a man of his word, he contrived, the very next evening, to send off the Government cutter on some urgent bit of special service. As her commander could not spare a prize crew, he contented himself by taking away before he left all the sails of Brown's schooner to the very last rag, and towed his two boats on to the beach a couple of miles off.

"But in Brown's crew there was a Solomon Islander, kidnapped in his youth and devoted to Brown, who was the best man of the whole gang. That fellow swam off to the coaster —five hundred yards or so— with the end of a warp made up of all the running gear unrove for the purpose. The water was smooth, and the bay dark, 'like the inside of a cow,' as Brown described it. The Solomon Islander clambered over the bulwarks with the end of the rope in his teeth. The crew of the coaster—all Tagals—were ashore having a jollification in the native village. The two shipkeepers left on board woke up and saw the devil. It had glittering eyes and leaped quick as lightning about the deck. They fell on their knees, paralysed with fear, crossing themselves and mumbling prayers. With a knife he found in the caboose the Solomon Islander, without interrupting their orisons, stabbed first one, then the other; with the same knife he set to sawing patiently at the coir cable till suddenly it parted under the blade with a splash. Then in the silence of the bay he let out a cautious shout, and Brown's gang, who meantime had been peering and straining their hopeful ears in the darkness, began to pull gently at their end of the warp. In less than five minutes the two

schooners came together with a slight shock and a creak of spars.

"Brown's crowd transferred themselves without losing an instant, taking with them their firearms and a large supply of ammunition. They were sixteen in all: two runaway bluejackets, a lanky deserter from a Yankee man-of-war, a couple of simple, blond Scandinavians, a mulatto of sorts, one bland Chinaman who cooked—and the rest of the nondescript spawn of the South Seas. None of them cared; Brown bent them to his will, and Brown, indifferent to gallows, was running away from the spectre of a Spanish prison. He didn't give them the time to trans-ship enough provisions; the weather was calm, the air was charged with dew, and when they cast off the ropes and set sail to a faint off-shore draught there was no flutter in the damp canvas; their old schooner seemed to detach itself gently from the stolen craft and slip away silently, together with the black mass of the coast, into the night.

"They got clear away. Brown related to me in detail their passage down the Straits of Macassar. It is a harrowing and desperate story. They were short of food and water; they boarded several native craft and got a little from each. With a stolen ship Brown did not dare to put into any port, of course. He had no money to buy anything, no papers to show, and no lie plausible enough to get him out again. An Arab barque, under the Dutch flag, surprised one night at anchor off Poulo Laut, yielded a little dirty rice, a bunch of bananas, and a cask of water; three days of squally, misty weather from the north-east shot the schooner across the Java Sea. The yellow muddy waves drenched that collection of hungry ruffians. They sighted mail-boats moving on their appointed routes; passed well-found home ships with rusty iron sides anchored in the shallow sea waiting for a change of weather or the turn of the tide; an English gunboat, white and trim, with two slim masts, crossed their bows one day in the distance; and on another occasion a Dutch corvette, black and heavily sparred, loomed up on their quarter, steaming dead slow in the mist. They slipped through unseen or disregarded, a wan, sallow-faced band of utter outcasts, enraged with hunger and hunted by fear. Brown's idea was to make for Madagascar, where he expected, on grounds not altogether illusory, to sell the schooner in Tamatave, and no questions asked, or perhaps obtain some more or less forged papers for her. Yet before he could face the long passage across the Indian Ocean food was wanted—water too.

"Perhaps he had heard of Patusan—or perhaps he just only happened to see the name written in small letters on the chart—probably that of a largish village up a river in a native state, perfectly defenceless, far from the beaten tracks of the sea and from the ends of submarine cables. He had done that kind of thing before—in the way of business; and this now was an absolute necessity, a question of life and death—

or rather of liberty. Of liberty! He was sure to get provisions—bullocks—rice—sweet-potatoes. The sorry gang licked their chops. A cargo of produce for the schooner perhaps could be extorted—and, who knows—some real ringing coined money! Some of these chiefs and village headmen can be made to part freely. He told me he would have roasted them rather than be baulked. I believe him. His men believed him too. They didn't cheer aloud, being a dumb pack, but made ready wolfishly.

"Luck served him as to weather. A few days of calm would have brought unmentionable horrors on board that schooner, but with the help of land and sea breezes, in less than a week after clearing the Sunda Straits, he anchored off the Batu Kring mouth within a pistol-shot of the fishing village.

"Fourteen of them packed into the schooner's long-boat (which was big, having been used for cargo-work) and started up the river, while two remained in charge of the schooner with food enough to keep starvation off for ten days. The tide and wind helped, and early one afternoon the big white boat under a ragged sail shouldered its way before the sea breeze into Patusan Reach, manned by fourteen assorted scarecrows glaring hungrily ahead, and fingering the breach-blocks of cheap rifles. Brown calculated upon the terrifying surprise of his appearance. They sailed in with the last of the flood; the Rajah's stockade gave no sign; the first houses on both sides of the stream seemed deserted. A few canoes were seen up the reach in full flight. Brown was astonished at the size of the place. A profound silence reigned. The wind dropped between the houses; two oars were got out and the boat held on up-stream, the idea being to effect a lodgment in the centre of the town before the inhabitants could think of resistance.

"It seems, however, that the headman of the fishing village at Batu Kring had managed to send off a timely warning. When the long-boat came abreast of the mosque (which Doramin had built: a structure with gables and roof finials of carved coral) the open space before it was full of people. A shout went up, and was followed by a clash of gongs all up the river. From a point above two little brass 6-pounders were discharged, and the round-shot came skipping down the empty reach, spirting glittering jets of water in the sunshine. In front of the mosque a shouting lot of men began firing in volleys that whipped athwart the current of the river; an irregular, rolling fusilade was opened on the boat from both banks, and Brown's men replied with a wild, rapid fire. The oars had been got in.

"The turn of the tide at high water comes on very quick in that river, and the boat in mid-stream, nearly hidden in smoke, began to drift back stern foremost. Along both shores the smoke thickened also, lying below the roofs in a level streak as you may see a long cloud

cutting the slope of a mountain. A tumult of war-cries, the vibrating clang of gongs, the deep snoring of drums, yells of rage, crashes of volley-firing, made an awful din, in which Brown sat confounded but steady at the tiller, working himself into a fury of hate and rage against those people who dared to defend themselves. Two of his men had been wounded, and he saw his retreat cut off below the town by some boats that had put off from Tunku Allang's stockade. There were six of them full of men. While he was thus beset he perceived the entrance of the narrow creek (the same which Jim had jumped at low water). It was then brim full. Steering the long-boat in, they landed, and, to make a long story short, they established themselves on a little knoll about 900 yards from the stockade, which, in fact, they commanded from that position. The slopes of the knoll were bare, but there were a few trees on the summit. They went to work cutting these down for a breastwork, and were fairly intrenched before dark; meantime the Rajah's boats remained in the river with curious neutrality. When the sun set the glare of many brushwood blazes lighted on the river-front, and between the double line of houses on the land side threw into black relief the roofs, the groups of slender palms, the heavy clumps of fruit-trees. Brown ordered the grass round his position to be fired; a low ring of thin flames under the slow ascending smoke wriggled rapidly down the slopes of the knoll; here and there a dry bush caught with a tall, vicious roar. The conflagration made a clear zone of fire for the rifles of the small party, and expired smouldering on the edge of the forests and along the muddy bank of the creek. A strip of jungle luxuriating in a damp hollow between the knoll and the Rajah's stockade stopped it on that side with a great crackling and detonations of bursting bamboo stems. The sky was sombre, velvety, and swarming with stars. The blackened ground smoked quietly with low creeping wisps, till a little breeze came on and blew everything away. Brown expected an attack to be delivered as soon as the tide had flowed enough again to enable the war-boats which had cut off his retreat to enter the creek. At any rate he was sure there would be an attempt to carry off his long-boat, which lay below the hill, a dark high lump on the feeble sheen of a wet mud-flat. But no move of any sort was made by the boats in the river. Over the stockade and the Rajah's buildings Brown saw their lights on the water. They seemed to be anchored across the stream. Other lights afloat were moving in the reach, crossing and recrossing from side to side. There were also lights twinkling motionless upon the long walls of houses up the reach, as far as the bend, and more still beyond, others isolated inland. The loom of the big fires disclosed buildings, roofs, black piles as far as he could see. It was an immense place. The fourteen desperate invaders lying flat behind the felled trees

raised their chins to look over at the stir of that town that seemed to extend up-river for miles and swarm with thousands of angry men. They did not speak to each other. Now and then they would hear a loud yell, or a single shot rang out, fired very far somewhere. But round their position everything was still, dark, silent. They seemed to be forgotten, as if the excitement keeping awake all the population had nothing to do with them, as if they had been dead already."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"All the events of that night have a great importance, since they brought about a situation which remained unchanged till Jim's return. Jim had been away in the interior for more than a week, and it was Dain Waris who had directed the first repulse. That brave and intelligent youth ('who knew how to fight after the manner of white men') wished to settle the business off-hand, but his people were too much for him. He had not Jim's racial prestige and the reputation of invincible, supernatural power. He was not the visible, tangible incarnation of unfailing truth and of unfailing victory. Beloved, trusted, and admired as he was, he was still one of *them*, while Jim was one of *us*. Moreover, the white man, a tower of strength in himself, was invulnerable, while Dain Waris could be killed. Those unexpressed thoughts guided the opinions of the chief men of the town who elected to assemble in Jim's fort for deliberation upon the emergency as if to draw strength from the spirit of the absent white man. Their temper was unforgiving. The Bugis especially were exasperated. The shooting of Brown's ruffians was so far good and lucky that there had been half-a-dozen casualties amongst the defenders. The wounded were lying on the verandah tended by their women-folk. The women and children from the lower part of the town had been sent into the fort at the first alarm. There Jewel was in command, very efficient and high-spirited, obeyed by Jim's 'own people,' who, quitting in a body their little settlement under the stockade, had gone in to form the garrison. The refugees crowded round her; and through the whole affair, to the very disastrous last, she showed an extraordinary martial ardour. It was to her that Dain Waris had gone at once at the first intelligence of danger, for you must know that Jim was the only one in Patusan who possessed a store of gunpowder. Stein, with whom he had kept up intimate relations by letters, had obtained from the Dutch Government a special authorisation to export five hundred kegs of it to Patusan. The powder-magazine was a small hut of rough logs covered entirely with earth, and in Jim's absence the girl had the key. In the council, held at eleven

o'clock in the evening in Jim's dining-room, she backed up Waris's advice for immediate and vigorous action. I am told that she stood up by the side of Jim's empty chair at the head of the long table and made a warlike impassioned speech, which for the moment extorted murmurs of approbation from the assembled headmen. Old Doramin, who had not showed himself outside his own gate for more than a year, had been brought across with great difficulty. He was, of course, the chief man there. The temper of the council was very unforgiving, and the old man's word would have been decisive; but it is my opinion that, well aware of his son's fiery courage, he dared not pronounce the word. More dilatory counsels prevailed. A certain Haji Saman pointed out at great length that 'these tyrannical and ferocious men had delivered themselves to a certain death in any case. They would stand fast on their hill and starve, or they would try to regain their boat and be shot from ambushes across the creek, or they would break and fly into the forest and perish singly there.' He argued that by the use of proper stratagems these evil-minded strangers could be destroyed without the risk of a battle, and his words had a great weight, especially with the Patusan men proper. What unsettled the minds of the townfolk was the failure of the Rajah's boats to act at the decisive moment. It was the diplomatic Kassim who represented the Rajah at the council. He spoke very little, listened smilingly, very friendly and impenetrable. During the sitting messengers kept arriving every few minutes almost, with reports of the invaders' proceedings. Wild and exaggerated rumours were flying: there was a large ship at the mouth of the river with big guns and many more men—some white, others savages with black skins and of bloodthirsty appearance. They were coming with many more boats to exterminate every living thing. A sense of near, incomprehensible danger affected the common people. At one moment there was a panic in the courtyard amongst the women; shrieking; a rush; children crying—Haji Saman went out to quiet them. Then a fort sentry fired at something moving on the river, and nearly killed a villager bringing in his women-folk in a canoe together with the best of his domestic utensils and a dozen fowls. This caused more confusion. Meantime the palaver inside Jim's house went on in the presence of the girl. Doramin sat fierce-faced, heavy, looking at the speakers in turn, and breathing slow like a bull. He didn't speak till the last, after Kassim had declared that the Rajah's boats would be called in because the men were required to defend his master's stockade. Dain Waris in his father's presence would offer no opinion, though the girl entreated him in Jim's name to speak out. She offered him Jim's own men in her anxiety to have these intruders driven out at once. He only shook his head, after a glance or

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"Half an hour's confidential talk with Cornelius opened Brown's eyes as to the home affairs of Patusan. He was on the alert at once. There were possibilities, immense possibilities; but before he would talk over Cornelius's proposals he demanded that some food should be sent up the hill as a guarantee of good faith. Cornelius went off, creeping sluggishly down the hill on the side of the Rajah's place, and after some delay a few of Tunku Allang's men came up, bringing a scanty supply of rice, chillies, and dried fish. This was immeasurably better than nothing. Later on Cornelius returned accompanying Kassim, who stepped out with an air of perfect good-humoured trustfulness, in sandals, and muffled up from neck to ankles in white sheeting. He shook hands with Brown discreetly, and the three drew aside for a conference. Brown's men, recovering their confidence, were slapping each other on the back, and cast knowing glances at their captain while they busied themselves with preparations for cooking.

"Kassim disliked Doramin and his Bugis very much, but he hated the new order of things still more. It had occurred to him that these whites, together with the Rajah's followers, could attack and defeat the Bugis before Jim's return. Then he reasoned general defection was sure to follow, and the reign of the white man who protected poor people would be over. Afterwards the new allies could be dealt with. They would have no friends. The fellow was perfectly able to perceive the difference of character, and had seen enough of white men to know that these new-comers were outcasts, men without country. Brown preserved a stern and inscrutable demeanour. When he first heard Cornelius's voice demanding admittance, it brought merely the hope of a loophole for escape. In less than an hour other thoughts were seething in his head. Urged by an extreme necessity, he had come there to steal food, a few tons of rubber or gum may be, perhaps a handful of dollars, and had found himself enmeshed by deadly dangers. Now in consequence of these overtures from Kassim he began to think of stealing the whole country. Some confounded fellow had apparently accomplished something of the kind—single-handed at that. Couldn't have done it very well though. Perhaps they could work together—squeeze everything dry and then go out quietly. In the course of his negotiations with Kassim he became aware that he was supposed to have a big ship with plenty of men outside. Kassim begged him earnestly to have this big ship with his many guns and men

two at Doramin. Finally, when the council broke up it had been decided that the houses nearest the creek should be strongly occupied to obtain the command of the enemy's boat. The boat itself was not to be interfered with openly, so that the robbers on the hill should be tempted to embark, when a well-directed fire would kill most of them, no doubt. To cut the escape of those who might survive, and to prevent more of them coming up, Dain Waris was ordered by Doramin to take an armed party of Bugis down the river to a certain spot fifteen miles below Patusan, and there form a camp on the shore and blockade the stream with the canoes. I don't believe for a moment that Doramin feared the arrival of fresh forces. My opinion is that his conduct was guided solely by his wish to keep his son out of harm's way. To prevent a rush being made into the town the construction of a stockade was to be commenced at daylight at the end of the street on the left bank. The old Nakhoda declared his intention to command there himself. A distribution of powder, bullets, and percussion-caps was made immediately under the girl's supervision. Several messengers were to be despatched in different directions after Jim, whose exact whereabouts were unknown. These men started at dawn, but before that time Kassim had managed to open communications with the besieged Brown.

"That accomplished diplomatist and confidant of the Rajah, on leaving the fort to go back to his master, took into his boat Cornelius, whom he found slinking mutely amongst the people in the courtyard. Kassim had a little plan of his own and wanted him for an interpreter. Thus it came about that towards morning Brown, reflecting upon the desperate nature of his position, heard from the marshy overgrown hollow an amicable, quavering, strained voice crying—in English—for permission to come up, under a promise of personal safety and on a very important errand. He was overjoyed. If he was spoken to he was no longer a hunted wild beast. These friendly sounds took off at once the awful stress of vigilant watchfulness as of so many blind men not knowing whence the deathblow might come. He pretended a great reluctance. The voice declared itself 'a white man. A poor, ruined, old man who had been living here for years.' A mist, wet and chilly, lay on the slopes of the hill, and after some more shouting from one to the other, Brown called out, 'Come on, then, but alone, mind!' As a matter of fact—he told me, writhing with rage at the recollection of his helplessness—it made no difference. They couldn't see more than a few yards before them, and no treachery could make their position worse. By-and-by Cornelius, in his week-day attire of a ragged dirty shirt and pants, barefooted, with a broken-rimmed pith hat on his head, was made out vaguely, sidling up to the defences,

hesitating, stopping to listen in a peering posture. 'Come along! You are safe,' yelled Brown, while his men stared. All their hopes of life became suddenly centred in that dilapidated, mean new-comer, who in profound silence clambered clumsily over a felled tree-trunk, and shivering, with his sour mistrustful face, looked about at the knot of bearded, anxious, sleepless desperadoes.

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brought up the river without delay for the Rajah's service. Brown professed himself willing, and on this basis the negotiation was carried on with mutual distrust. Three times in the course of the morning the courteous and active Kassim went down to consult the Rajah and came up busily with his long stride. Brown, while bargaining, had a sort of grim enjoyment in thinking of his wretched schooner with nothing but a heap of dirt in her hold that stood for an armed ship, and a Chinaman and a lame ex-beach-comber of Levuka on board, who represented all his many men. In the afternoon he obtained further doles of food, a promise of some money, and a supply of mats for his men to make shelters for themselves. They lay down and snored, protected from the burning sunshine; but Brown, sitting fully exposed on one of the felled trees, feasted his eyes upon the view of the town and the river. There was much loot there. Cornelius, who had made himself at home in the camp, talked at his elbow, pointing out the localities, imparting advice, giving his own version of Jim's character, and commenting in his own fashion upon the events of the last three years. Brown, who, apparently indifferent and gazing away, listened with attention to every word, could not make out clearly what sort of man this Jim could be. 'What's his name? Jim! Jim! That's not enough for a man's name.' 'They call him,' said Cornelius scornfully, 'Tuan Jim here. As you may say Lord Jim.' 'What is he? Where does he come from?' inquired Brown. 'What sort of man is he? Is he an Englishman?' 'Yes, yes, he's an Englishman. I am an Englishman too. From Malacca. He is a fool. All you have to do is to kill him and then you are king here. Everything belongs to him,' explained Cornelius. 'It strikes me he may be made to share with somebody before very long,' commented Brown half aloud. 'No, no. The proper way is to kill him the first chance you get, and then you can do what you like,' Cornelius would insist earnestly. 'I have lived for many years here, and I am giving you a friend's advice.'

"In such converse and in gloating over the view of Patusan, which he had determined in his mind should become his prey, Brown whiled away most of the afternoon while his men rested. On that day Dain Waris's fleet of canoes, stealing one by one under the shore farthest from the creek, went down to close the river against his retreat. Of this Brown was not aware, and Kassim, who came up the knoll an hour before sunset, took good care not to enlighten him. He wanted the white man's ship to come up the river, and this news, he feared, would be discouraging. He was very pressing with Brown to send the 'order,' offering at the same time a trusty messenger, who for greater secrecy (as he explained) would make his way by land to the mouth of the river and deliver the 'order' on board. After some reflection Brown judged it expedient to tear a

page out of his pocket-book, on which he simply wrote, 'We are getting on. Big job. Detain the man.' The stolid youth selected by Kassim for that service performed it faithfully, and was rewarded by being suddenly tipped, head first, into the schooner's empty hold by the ex-beach-comber and the Chinaman, who thereupon hastened to put on the hatches. What became of him afterwards Brown did not say."

CHAPTER XL.

"Brown's object was to gain time by fooling with Kassim's diplomacy. For doing a real stroke of business he could not help thinking the white man was the person to work with. He could not imagine such a chap (who must be confoundedly clever, after all, to get hold of the natives like that) refusing a help that would do away with the necessity for slow, cautious, risky cheating, that imposed itself as the only possible line of conduct for a single-handed man. He, Brown, would offer him the power. No man could hesitate. Everything was in coming to a clear understanding. Of course they would share. The idea of there being a fort—all ready to his hand—a real fort, with artillery (he knew this from Cornelius), excited him. Let him only once get in and . . . He would impose modest conditions. Not too low, though. The man was no fool, it seemed. They would work like brothers till, . . . till the time came for a quarrel and a shot that would settle all accounts. With grim impatience of plunder he wished himself to be talking with the man now. The land already seemed to be his to tear to pieces, squeeze, and throw away. Meantime Kassim had to be fooled for the sake of food first—and for a second string. But the principal thing was to get something to eat from day to day. Besides, he was not averse to begin fighting on that Rajah's account, and teach a lesson to those people who had received him with shots. The lust of battle was upon him.

"I am sorry that I can't give you this part of the story, which of course I have mainly from Brown, in Brown's own words. There was in the broken, violent speech of that man, unveiling before me his thoughts with the very hand of Death upon his throat, an undisguised ruthlessness of purpose, a strange vengeful attitude towards his own past, and a blind belief in the righteousness of his will against all mankind, something of that feeling which could induce the leader of a horde of wandering cut-throats to call himself proudly the Scourge of God. No doubt the natural senseless ferocity which is the basis of such a character was exasperated by failure, ill-luck, and the recent privations, as well as by the desperate position in which he found himself; but what was most remarkable of all was this, that while he planned treacherous alliances, had already settled in his own mind the fate of

the white man, and intrigued in an overbearing, off-hand manner with Kassim, one could perceive that what he really desired, almost in spite of himself, was to play havoc with that jungle town which had defied him, to see it strewn over with corpses and enveloped in flames. Listening to his pitiless, panting voice, I could imagine how he must have looked at it from the hillock, peopling it with images of murder and rapine. The part nearest to the creek wore an abandoned aspect, though as a matter of fact every house concealed a few armed men on the alert. Suddenly far over the stretch of waste ground, interspersed with small patches of low dense bush, excavations, heaps of rubbish, with trodden paths between, a man, solitary and looking very small, strolled out into the deserted opening of the street between the shut-up, dark, lifeless buildings at the end. Perhaps one of the inhabitants, who had fled to the other bank of the river, coming back for some object of domestic use. Evidently he supposed himself quite safe at that distance from the hill on the other side of the creek. A light stockade, set up hastily, was just round the turn of the street, full of his friends. He moved leisurely. Brown saw him, and instantly called to his side the Yankee deserter, who acted as a sort of second in command. This lanky, loose-jointed fellow came forward, wooden-faced, trailing his rifle lazily. When he understood what was wanted from him a homicidal and conceited smile uncovered his teeth, making two deep folds down his sallow, leathery cheeks. He prided himself on being a dead shot. He dropped on one knee, and taking aim from a steady rest through the unlopped branches of a felled tree, fired, and at once stood up to look. The man, far away, turned his head to the report, made another step forward, seemed to hesitate, and abruptly got down on his hands and knees. In the silence that fell upon the sharp crack of the rifle, the dead shot, keeping his eyes fixed upon the quarry, guessed that 'this there coon's health would never be a source of anxiety to his friends any more.' The man's limbs were seen to move rapidly under his body in an endeavour to run on all-fours. In that empty space arose a multitudinous shout of dismay and surprise. The man sank flat, face down, and moved no more. 'That showed them what we could do,' said Brown to me. 'Struck the fear of sudden death into them. That was what we wanted. They were two hundred to one, and this gave them something to think over for the night. Not one of them had an idea of such a long shot before. That beggar belonging to the Rajah scouted down-hill with his eyes hanging out of his head.'

"As he was telling me this he tried with a shaking hand to wipe the thin foam on his blue writhing lips. 'Two hundred to one. Two hundred to one . . . strike terror, . . . terror, terror, I tell you. . . .' His own eyes were starting out of their sockets. He fell back,

clawing the air with skinny earthy fingers, sat up again, bowed and hairy, glared at me sideways like some man-beast of folk-lore, with open mouth in his miserable and awful agony before he got his speech back after that fit. There are sights one never forgets.

"Furthermore, to draw the enemy's fire and locate such parties as might have been hiding in the bushes along the creek, Brown ordered the Solomon Islander to go down to the boat and bring an oar, as you send a spaniel after a stick into the water. This failed, and the fellow came back without a single shot having been fired at him from anywhere. 'There's nobody,' opined some of the men. It is 'onnatural,' remarked the Yankee. Kassim, indeed, had gone, very much impressed, pleased too, and also uneasy. Pursuing his tortuous policy, he had despatched a message to Dain Waris warning him to look out for the white men's ship, which, he had had information, was about to come up the river. He minimised its strength and exhorted him to oppose its passage. This double-dealing answered his purpose, which was to keep the Bugis forces divided and to weaken them by fighting. On the other hand, he had in the course of that day sent word to the assembled Bugis chiefs in town, assuring them that he was trying to induce the invaders to retire; his messages to the fort asked earnestly for powder for the Rajah's men. It was a long time since Tunku Allang had had ammunition for the score or so of old muskets rusting in their arm-racks in the audience-hall. The open intercourse between the hill and the palace unsettled all the minds. It was already time for men to take sides, it began to be said. There would soon be much bloodshed, and thereafter great trouble for many people. The social fabric of orderly, peaceful life, when every man was sure of to-morrow, the edifice raised by Jim's hands, seemed on that evening ready to collapse into a ruin reeking with blood. The poorer folk were already taking to the bush or flying up the river. A good many of the upper class judged it necessary to go and pay their court to the Rajah. The Rajah's youths jostled them rudely. Old Tunku Allang, almost out of his mind with fear and indecision, either kept a sullen silence or abused them violently for daring to come with empty hands: they departed very much frightened; only old Doramin kept his countrymen together and pursued his tactics inflexibly. Enthroned in a big chair behind the improvised stockade, he issued his orders in a deep veiled rumble, unmoved, like a deaf man, in the flying rumours.

"Dusk fell, hiding first the body of the dead man, which had been left lying with arms outstretched as if nailed to the ground, and then the revolving sphere of the night rolled smoothly over Patusan and came to a rest, showering the glitter of countless worlds upon the earth. Again, in the exposed part of the town big fires blazed along the only street, revealing from distance to dis-

raised their chins to look over at the stir of that town that seemed to extend up-river for miles and swarm with thousands of angry men. They did not speak to each other. Now and then they would hear a loud yell, or a single shot rang out, fired very far somewhere. But round their position everything was still, dark, silent. They seemed to be forgotten, as if the excitement keeping awake all the population had nothing to do with them, as if they had been dead already."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"All the events of that night have a great importance, since they brought about a situation which remained unchanged till Jim's return. Jim had been away in the interior for more than a week, and it was Dain Waris who had directed the first repulse. That brave and intelligent youth ('who knew how to fight after the manner of white men') wished to settle the business off-hand, but his people were too much for him. He had not Jim's racial prestige and the reputation of invincible, supernatural power. He was not the visible, tangible incarnation of unfailing truth and of unfailing victory. Beloved, trusted, and admired as he was, he was still one of *them*, while Jim was one of *us*. Moreover, the white man, a tower of strength in himself, was invulnerable, while Dain Waris could be killed. Those unexpressed thoughts guided the opinions of the chief men of the town who elected to assemble in Jim's fort for deliberation upon the emergency as if to draw strength from the spirit of the absent white man. Their temper was unforgiving. The Bugis especially were exasperated. The shooting of Brown's ruffians was so far good and lucky that there had been half-a-dozen casualties amongst the defenders. The wounded were lying on the verandah tended by their women-folk. The women and children from the lower part of the town had been sent into the fort at the first alarm. There Jewel was in command, very efficient and high-spirited, obeyed by Jim's 'own people,' who, quitting in a body their little settlement under the stockade, had gone in to form the garrison. The refugees crowded round her; and through the whole affair, to the very disastrous last, she showed an extraordinary martial ardour. It was to her that Dain Waris had gone at once at the first intelligence of danger, for you must know that Jim was the only one in Patusan who possessed a store of gunpowder. Stein, with whom he had kept up intimate relations by letters, had obtained from the Dutch Government a special authorisation to export five hundred kegs of it to Patusan. The powder-magazine was a small hut of rough logs covered entirely with earth, and in Jim's absence the girl had the key. In the council, held at eleven

o'clock in the evening in Jim's dining-room, she backed up Waris's advice for immediate and vigorous action. I am told that she stood up by the side of Jim's empty chair at the head of the long table and made a warlike impassioned speech, which for the moment extorted murmurs of approbation from the assembled headmen. Old Doramin, who had not showed himself outside his own gate for more than a year, had been brought across with great difficulty. He was, of course, the chief man there. The temper of the council was very unforgiving, and the old man's word would have been decisive; but it is my opinion that, well aware of his son's fiery courage, he dared not pronounce the word. More dilatory counsels prevailed. A certain Haji Saman pointed out at great length that 'these tyrannical and ferocious men had delivered themselves to a certain death in any case. They would stand fast on their hill and starve, or they would try to regain their boat and be shot from ambushes across the creek, or they would break and fly into the forest and perish singly there.' He argued that by the use of proper stratagems these evil-minded strangers could be destroyed without the risk of a battle, and his words had a great weight, especially with the Patusan men proper. What unsettled the minds of the townfolk was the failure of the Rajah's boats to act at the decisive moment. It was the diplomatic Kassim who represented the Rajah at the council. He spoke very little, listened smilingly, very friendly and impenetrable. During the sitting messengers kept arriving every few minutes almost, with reports of the invaders' proceedings. Wild and exaggerated rumours were flying: there was a large ship at the mouth of the river with big guns and many more men—some white, others savages with black skins and of bloodthirsty appearance. They were coming with many more boats to exterminate every living thing. A sense of near, incomprehensible danger affected the common people. At one moment there was a panic in the courtyard amongst the women; shrieking; a rush; children crying—Haji Saman went out to quiet them. Then a fort sentry fired at something moving on the river, and nearly killed a villager bringing in his women-folk in a canoe together with the best of his domestic utensils and a dozen fowls. This caused more confusion. Meantime the palaver inside Jim's house went on in the presence of the girl. Doramin sat fierce-faced, heavy, looking at the speakers in turn, and breathing slow like a bull. He didn't speak till the last, after Kassim had declared that the Rajah's boats would be called in because the men were required to defend his master's stockade. Dain Waris in his father's presence would offer no opinion, though the girl entreated him in Jim's name to speak out. She offered him Jim's own men in her anxiety to have these intruders driven out at once. He only shook his head, after a glance or

two at Doramin. Finally, when the council broke up it had been decided that the houses nearest the creek should be strongly occupied to obtain the command of the enemy's boat. The boat itself was not to be interfered with openly, so that the robbers on the hill should be tempted to embark, when a well-directed fire would kill most of them, no doubt. To cut the escape of those who might survive, and to prevent more of them coming up, Dain Waris was ordered by Doramin to take an armed party of Bugis down the river to a certain spot fifteen miles below Patusan, and there form a camp on the shore and blockade the stream with the canoes. I don't believe for a moment that Doramin feared the arrival of fresh forces. My opinion is that his conduct was guided solely by his wish to keep his son out of harm's way. To prevent a rush being made into the town the construction of a stockade was to be commenced at daylight at the end of the street on the left bank. The old Nakhoda declared his intention to command there himself. A distribution of powder, bullets, and percussion-caps was made immediately under the girl's supervision. Several messengers were to be despatched in different directions after Jim, whose exact whereabouts were unknown. These men started at dawn, but before that time Kassim had managed to open communications with the besieged Brown.

"That accomplished diplomatist and confidant of the Rajah, on leaving the fort to go back to his master, took into his boat Cornelius, whom he found slinking mutely amongst the people in the courtyard. Kassim had a little plan of his own and wanted him for an interpreter. Thus it came about that towards morning Brown, reflecting upon the desperate nature of his position, heard from the marshy overgrown hollow an amicable, quavering, strained voice crying—in English—for permission to come up, under a promise of personal safety and on a very important errand. He was overjoyed. If he was spoken to he was no longer a hunted wild beast. These friendly sounds took off at once the awful stress of vigilant watchfulness as of so many blind men not knowing whence the deathblow might come. He pretended a great reluctance. The voice declared itself 'a white man. A poor, ruined, old man who had been living here for years.' A mist, wet and chilly, lay on the slopes of the hill, and after some more shouting from one to the other, Brown called out, 'Come on, then, but alone, mind!' As a matter of fact—he told me, writhing with rage at the recollection of his helplessness—it made no difference. They couldn't see more than a few yards before them, and no treachery could make their position worse. By-and-by Cornelius, in his week-day attire of a ragged dirty shirt and pants, barefooted, with a broken-rimmed pith hat on his head, was made out vaguely, sidling up to the defences,

hesitating, stopping to listen in a peering posture. 'Come along! You are safe,' yelled Brown, while his men stared. All their hopes of life became suddenly centred in that dilapidated, mean new-comer, who in profound silence clambered clumsily over a felled tree-trunk, and shivering, with his sour mistrustful face, looked about at the knot of bearded, anxious, sleepless desperadoes.

"Half an hour's confidential talk with Cornelius opened Brown's eyes as to the home affairs of Patusan. He was on the alert at once. There were possibilities, immense possibilities; but before he would talk over Cornelius's proposals he demanded that some food should be sent up the hill as a guarantee of good faith. Cornelius went off, creeping sluggishly down the hill on the side of the Rajah's place, and after some delay a few of Tunku Allang's men came up, bringing a scanty supply of rice, chillies, and dried fish. This was immeasurably better than nothing. Later on Cornelius returned accompanying Kassim, who stepped out with an air of perfect good-humoured trustfulness, in sandals, and muffled up from neck to ankles in white sheeting. He shook hands with Brown discreetly, and the three drew aside for a conference. Brown's men, recovering their confidence, were slapping each other on the back, and cast knowing glances at their captain while they busied themselves with preparations for cooking.

"Kassim disliked Doramin and his Bugis very much, but he hated the new order of things still more. It had occurred to him that these whites, together with the Rajah's followers, could attack and defeat the Bugis before Jim's return. Then he reasoned general defection was sure to follow, and the reign of the white man who protected poor people would be over. Afterwards the new allies could be dealt with. They would have no friends. The fellow was perfectly able to perceive the difference of character, and had seen enough of white men to know that these new-comers were outcasts, men without country. Brown preserved a stern and inscrutable demeanour. When he first heard Cornelius's voice demanding admittance, it brought merely the hope of a loophole for escape. In less than an hour other thoughts were seething in his head. Urged by an extreme necessity, he had come there to steal food, a few tons of rubber or gum may be, perhaps a handful of dollars, and had found himself enmeshed by deadly dangers. Now in consequence of these overtures from Kassim he began to think of stealing the whole country. Some confounded fellow had apparently accomplished something of the kind—single-handed at that. Couldn't have done it very well though. Perhaps they could work together—squeeze everything dry and then go out quietly. In the course of his negotiations with Kassim he became aware that he was supposed to have a big ship with plenty of men outside. Kassim begged him earnestly to have this big ship with his many guns and men

brought up the river without delay for the Rajah's service. Brown professed himself willing, and on this basis the negotiation was carried on with mutual distrust. Three times in the course of the morning the courteous and active Kassim went down to consult the Rajah and came up busily with his long stride. Brown, while bargaining, had a sort of grim enjoyment in thinking of his wretched schooner with nothing but a heap of dirt in her hold that stood for an armed ship, and a Chinaman and a lame ex-beach-comber of Levuka on board, who represented all his many men. In the afternoon he obtained further doles of food, a promise of some money, and a supply of mats for his men to make shelters for themselves. They lay down and snored, protected from the burning sunshine; but Brown, sitting fully exposed on one of the felled trees, feasted his eyes upon the view of the town and the river. There was much loot there. Cornelius, who had made himself at home in the camp, talked at his elbow, pointing out the localities, imparting advice, giving his own version of Jim's character, and commenting in his own fashion upon the events of the last three years. Brown, who, apparently indifferent and gazing away, listened with attention to every word, could not make out clearly what sort of man this Jim could be. 'What's his name? Jim! Jim! That's not enough for a man's name.' 'They call him,' said Cornelius scornfully, 'Tuan Jim here. As you may say Lord Jim.' 'What is he? Where does he come from?' inquired Brown. 'What sort of man is he? Is he an Englishman?' 'Yes, yes, he's an Englishman. I am an Englishman too. From Malacca. He is a fool. All you have to do is to kill him and then you are king here. Everything belongs to him,' explained Cornelius. 'It strikes me he may be made to share with somebody before very long,' commented Brown half aloud. 'No, no. The proper way is to kill him the first chance you get, and then you can do what you like,' Cornelius would insist earnestly. 'I have lived for many years here, and I am giving you a friend's advice.'

"In such converse and in gloating over the view of Patusan, which he had determined in his mind should become his prey, Brown whiled away most of the afternoon while his men rested. On that day Dain Waris's fleet of canoes, stealing one by one under the shore farthest from the creek, went down to close the river against his retreat. Of this Brown was not aware, and Kassim, who came up the knoll an hour before sunset, took good care not to enlighten him. He wanted the white man's ship to come up the river, and this news, he feared, would be discouraging. He was very pressing with Brown to send the 'order,' offering at the same time a trusty messenger, who for greater secrecy (as he explained) would make his way by land to the mouth of the river and deliver the 'order' on board. After some reflection Brown judged it expedient to tear a

page out of his pocket-book, on which he simply wrote, 'We are getting on. Big job. Detain the man.' The stolid youth selected by Kassim for that service performed it faithfully, and was rewarded by being suddenly tipped, head first, into the schooner's empty hold by the ex-beach-comber and the Chinaman, who thereupon hastened to put on the hatches. What became of him afterwards Brown did not say."

CHAPTER XL.

"Brown's object was to gain time by fooling with Kassim's diplomacy. For doing a real stroke of business he could not help thinking the white man was the person to work with. He could not imagine such a chap (who must be confoundedly clever, after all, to get hold of the natives like that) refusing a help that would do away with the necessity for slow, cautious, risky cheating, that imposed itself as the only possible line of conduct for a single-handed man. He, Brown, would offer him the power. No man could hesitate. Everything was in coming to a clear understanding. Of course they would share. The idea of there being a fort—all ready to his hand—a real fort, with artillery (he knew this from Cornelius), excited him. Let him only once get in and . . . He would impose modest conditions. Not too low, though. The man was no fool, it seemed. They would work like brothers till, . . . till the time came for a quarrel and a shot that would settle all accounts. With grim impatience of plunder he wished himself to be talking with the man now. The land already seemed to be his to tear to pieces, squeeze, and throw away. Meantime Kassim had to be fooled for the sake of food first—and for a second string. But the principal thing was to get something to eat from day to day. Besides, he was not averse to begin fighting on that Rajah's account, and teach a lesson to those people who had received him with shots. The lust of battle was upon him.

"I am sorry that I can't give you this part of the story, which of course I have mainly from Brown, in Brown's own words. There was in the broken, violent speech of that man, unveiling before me his thoughts with the very hand of Death upon his throat, an undisguised ruthlessness of purpose, a strange vengeful attitude towards his own past, and a blind belief in the righteousness of his will against all mankind, something of that feeling which could induce the leader of a horde of wandering cut-throats to call himself proudly the Scourge of God. No doubt the natural senseless ferocity which is the basis of such a character was exasperated by failure, ill-luck, and the recent privations, as well as by the desperate position in which he found himself; but what was most remarkable of all was this, that while he planned treacherous alliances, had already settled in his own mind the fate of

the white man, and intrigued in an overbearing, off-hand manner with Kassim, one could perceive that what he really desired, almost in spite of himself, was to play havoc with that jungle town which had defied him, to see it strewn over with corpses and enveloped in flames. Listening to his pitiless, panting voice, I could imagine how he must have looked at it from the hillock, peopling it with images of murder and rapine. The part nearest to the creek wore an abandoned aspect, though as a matter of fact every house concealed a few armed men on the alert. Suddenly far over the stretch of waste ground, interspersed with small patches of low dense bush, excavations, heaps of rubbish, with trodden paths between, a man, solitary and looking very small, strolled out into the deserted opening of the street between the shut-up, dark, lifeless buildings at the end. Perhaps one of the inhabitants, who had fled to the other bank of the river, coming back for some object of domestic use. Evidently he supposed himself quite safe at that distance from the hill on the other side of the creek. A light stockade, set up hastily, was just round the turn of the street, full of his friends. He moved leisurely. Brown saw him, and instantly called to his side the Yankee deserter, who acted as a sort of second in command. This lanky, loose-jointed fellow came forward, wooden-faced, trailing his rifle lazily. When he understood what was wanted from him a homicidal and conceited smile uncovered his teeth, making two deep folds down his sallow, leathery cheeks. He prided himself on being a dead shot. He dropped on one knee, and taking aim from a steady rest through the unlopped branches of a felled tree, fired, and at once stood up to look. The man, far away, turned his head to the report, made another step forward, seemed to hesitate, and abruptly got down on his hands and knees. In the silence that fell upon the sharp crack of the rifle, the dead shot, keeping his eyes fixed upon the quarry, guessed that 'this there coon's health would never be a source of anxiety to his friends any more.' The man's limbs were seen to move rapidly under his body in an endeavour to run on all-fours. In that empty space arose a multitudinous shout of dismay and surprise. The man sank flat, face down, and moved no more. 'That showed them what we could do,' said Brown to me. 'Struck the fear of sudden death into them. That was what we wanted. They were two hundred to one, and this gave them something to think over for the night. Not one of them had an idea of such a long shot before. That beggar belonging to the Rajah scouted down-hill with his eyes hanging out of his head.'

"As he was telling me this he tried with a shaking hand to wipe the thin foam on his blue writhing lips. 'Two hundred to one. Two hundred to one . . . strike terror, . . . terror, terror, I tell you. . . .' His own eyes were starting out of their sockets. He fell back,

lated, and then prompted the answer. 'Speak,' cried Brown, 'we hear.' Then the voice, declaiming in the sonorous inflated tone of a herald, and shifting continually on the edge of the vague waste-land, proclaimed that between the men of the Bugis nation living in Patusan and the white men on the hill and those with them, there would be no faith, no compassion, no speech, no peace. A bush rustled; a haphazard volley rang out. 'Dam' foolishness,' muttered the Yankee, vexedly grounding the butt. Cornelius translated. The wounded man below the hill, after crying out twice, 'Take me up! take me up!' went on complaining in moans. While he had kept on the blackened earth of the slope, and afterwards crouching in the boat, he had been safe enough. It seems that in his joy at finding the tobacco he forgot himself and jumped out on her off-side, as it were. The white boat, lying high and dry, showed him up; the creek was no more than seven yards wide in that place, and there happened to be a man crouching in the bush on the other bank.

"He was a Bugis of Tondano only lately come to Patusan, and a relation of the man shot in the afternoon. That famous long shot had indeed appalled the beholders. The man in utter security had been struck down, in full view of his friends, dropping with a joke on his lips, and they seemed to see in the act an atrocity which had stirred a bitter rage. That relation of his, Si-Lapa by name, was then with Doramin in the stockade only a few feet away. You who know these chaps must admit that the fellow showed an unusual pluck by volunteering to carry the message, alone, in the dark. Creeping across the open ground, he had deviated to the left and found himself opposite the boat. He was startled when Brown's man shouted. He came to a sitting position with his gun to his shoulder, and when the other jumped out, exposing himself, he pulled the trigger and lodged three jagged slugs point-blank into the poor wretch's stomach. Then, lying flat on his face, he gave himself up for dead, while a thin hail of lead chopped and swished the bushes close on his right hand; afterwards he delivered his speech shouting, bent double, dodging all the time in cover. With the last word he leaped sideways, lay close for a while, and afterwards got back to the houses unharmed, having achieved on that night such a renown as his children will not willingly allow to die.

"And on the hill the forlorn band let the two little heaps of embers go out under their bowed heads. They sat dejected on the ground with compressed lips and downcast eyes, listening to their comrade below. He was a strong man and died hard, with moans now loud, now sinking to a strange confidential note of pain. Sometimes he shrieked, and again, after a period of silence, he could be heard muttering deliriously a long and unintelligible complaint. Never for a moment did he cease.

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tance upon their glares the falling straight lines of roofs, the fragments of wattled walls jumbled in confusion, here and there a whole hut elevated in the glow upon the vertical black stripes of a group of high piles; and all this line of dwellings, revealed in patches by the swaying flames, seemed to flicker tortuously away up-river into the gloom at the heart of the land. A great silence, in which the looms of successive fires played without noise, extended into the darkness at the foot of the hill; but the other bank of the river, all dark save for a solitary bonfire at the river front before the fort, sent out into the air an increasing tremor that might have been the stamping of a multitude of feet, the hum of many voices, or the fall of an immensely distant waterfall. It was then, Brown confessed to me, while, turning his back on his men, he sat looking at it all, that notwithstanding his disdain, his ruthless faith in himself, a feeling came over him that at last he had run his head against a stone wall. Had his boat been afloat at the time, he believed he would have tried to steal away, taking his chances of a long chase down the river and of starvation at sea. It is very doubtful whether he would have succeeded in getting away. However he didn't try this. For another moment he had a passing thought of trying to rush the town, but he perceived very well that in the end he would find himself in the lighted street, where they would be shot down like dogs from the houses. They were two hundred to one—he thought, while his men, huddling round two heaps of smouldering embers, munched the last of the bananas and roasted the few yams they owed to Kassim's diplomacy. Cornelius sat amongst them dozing sulkily.

"Then one of the whites remembered that some tobacco had been left in the boat, and, encouraged by the impunity of the Solomon Islander, said he would go to fetch it. At this all the others shook off their despondency. Brown applied to, said, 'Go, and be d—d to you,' scornfully. He didn't think there was any danger in going to the creek in the dark. The man threw a leg over the tree-trunk and disappeared. A moment later he was heard clambering into the boat and then clambering out. 'I've got it,' he cried. A flash and a report at the very foot of the hill followed. 'I am hit,' yelled the man. 'Look out, look out —I am hit,' and instantly all the rifles went off. The hill squirted fire and noise into the night like a little volcano, and when Brown and the Yankee with curses and cuffs stopped the panic-stricken firing, a profound, weary groan floated up from the creek, succeeded by a plaint whose heartrending sadness was like some poison turning the blood cold in the veins. Then a strong voice pronounced several distinct incomprehensible words somewhere beyond the creek. 'Let no one fire,' shouted Brown. 'What does it mean?' . . . 'Do you hear on the hill? Do you hear? Do you hear?' repeated the voice three times. Cornelius trans-

lated, and then prompted the answer. 'Speak,' cried Brown, 'we hear.' Then the voice, declaiming in the sonorous inflated tone of a herald, and shifting continually on the edge of the vague waste-land, proclaimed that between the men of the Bugis nation living in Patusan and the white men on the hill and those with them, there would be no faith, no compassion, no speech, no peace. A bush rustled; a haphazard volley rang out. 'Dam' foolishness,' muttered the Yankee, vexedly grounding the butt. Cornelius translated. The wounded man below the hill, after crying out twice, 'Take me up! take me up!' went on complaining in moans. While he had kept on the blackened earth of the slope, and afterwards crouching in the boat, he had been safe enough. It seems that in his joy at finding the tobacco he forgot himself and jumped out on her off-side, as it were. The white boat, lying high and dry, showed him up; the creek was no more than seven yards wide in that place, and there happened to be a man crouching in the bush on the other bank.

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ning; yet, as this article is written to show, even a stray journalist on a fishing holiday can learn something of the measures that are being taken to develop the resources of his native country.

I was going to fish at Carrick, and had two hours in which I could see the new creamery at Killygordon, a place in the rich valley of the Lower Finn, just on the borders of Tyrone and Donegal. I met on the station platform the president of the creamery — a landlord and a Protestant. He took me up to the building and handed me over to the secretary, the owner of a small shop at the cross-roads adjoining, whom I should guess to be a Presbyterian. These facts are worth mentioning, for it is the essence of the new movement in Ireland that men of all creeds, religious or political, are brought together to work for a common end — which is not merely the material advantage of the members co-operating, nor the material prosperity of the country, but a harmony among classes divided by long-standing and jealously guarded hates. On a Saturday afternoon the creamery was not working, but I saw the machinery and the books: I saw also what interested me more—the secretary. This shrewd, clear-headed young shopkeeper belonged to a class from which the movement has encountered opposition. Co-operation can never be welcome to the retail trader, and the agricultural societies in which farmers combine to buy seeds, implements, and so forth from the wholesale merchants, naturally find little favour with men whose whole business is based on long and complicated accounts, involving a good deal of barter. Yet here was this young shopkeeper, not only actively concerned in a co-operative society but plainly a propagandist. In talking, he assumed instinctively the tone of a pioneer, and explained to me the difficulty there had been at first in convincing the farmers.

To begin with, they would not believe that it was physically possible to strip butter from milk fresh from the cow; then they did not see the good of combination; they thought it was some kind of a syndicate having for its object to drive down prices. But when after a few months they saw that every man got a good price for his milk, they began to come in, and being an intelligent class they followed the business working of the management. Books, of a model designed by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, are purchased, in which every fact of importance is daily registered,—the amount of milk daily taken in, the percentage of butter fat contained, the quantity of butter produced, the price paid for milk, the price realised for the butter; then details of working, the temperature at which the milk is separated, the number of revolutions of churn, the time given the cream to ripen, and so forth. These books, along with a minute account of incomings and outgoings, are submitted to the committee of

about twenty farmers who meet monthly. Thus the men interested in the working can not only check the process, but can convince themselves that every penny of actual profit, in addition to the price received for milk, is coming into their own pockets; and, what is more, as the secretary pointed out, they receive an excellent object-lesson in the conduct of business. This educational value is from the Society's point of view the most important aspect of the creamery; and if the book-keeping is an object-lesson, much more so is the actual process of manufacture. Nothing could better illustrate the change that has come over the world than a comparison between butter-making as it was done in our childhood and butter-making as it is carried on for the modern market. My own recollection is vivid enough of the "byre" with its four or five cows; the dairymaid who carried in the clean pails of milk; the cool flagged dairy where the pans stood while the cream formed; and the continual splashing and dashing of the churn that sounded through the passages as the girl with her strong bare arms worked the handle up and down for maybe an hour at a time. Good butter was made in that way, and none better—but also much bad. In cottages there was no dairy, and the churn was liable enough to be kept in a room where a family slept; or the butter, when made, might not infrequently have been stored in a press with three or four red herrings. It may explain the enthusiasm of my shopkeeper friend that every tradesman felt bound to take the butter of his customers, though in many cases all he could do with it was to send it to a biscuit factory. And, even admitting that in every case the butter was made and kept as well as could be desired, still the conditions of the modern market call for the creamery. A merchant who deals in butter by the hundredweight cannot afford to buy by the pound from small producers. Their product, though it may be individually good, is not uniform, and time and labour are wasted in sampling and classing the lots. What comes from the creamery, whether good or bad, is at least uniform, and the man who orders forty boxes need only look at one to know what he is buying and what he is selling. Uniformity of output is perhaps the most essential advantage secured by the creamery in the great markets of the world, and that is the first result of organisation—but it is by no means the only one. The simple process has become an exceedingly complex and delicate one.

Go to a creamery in the morning and you will see carts coming up with tins of a special size and shape. From these the milk is tilted into the receptacle of a weighing-machine, and from the milk a spoonful or so is taken as a sample, and put into a bottle marked with the farmer's name and number. Then the weight of milk is entered in the passbook and ledger, and the milk is tipped

from the machine into a vat. Even in this first stage care has to be exercised, for if the sample be taken from the top of milk, it contains too high a percentage of cream, and if from the bottom too little. A little boracic acid in the sample bottle preserves the samples for a fortnight till the fortnight's supply comes to be tested. The mass of the milk runs from the vat by a pipe into the separator, where the whirling of a turbine flings the heavier elements of the milk outward by centrifugal force, while the lighter cream is drawn off in a different direction. By another pipe the milk runs into a boiler, while the cream is pumped into a vat upstairs. Then comes an important stage in the process —the "pasteurising" of the milk. In the boiler the milk is raised rapidly to a temperature of 185°, and passes by a fresh pipe into the outer skin of a tin drum, which is corrugated in spirals. The inside of this drum is jacketed with cold water, of which a fresh supply is continually pumped in, and the milk running down the spirals along the outside of the drum is no warmer than the water by the time it falls into the tank at the bottom. This sudden raising and lowering of the temperature kills all germs, and the skim-milk thus treated keeps perfectly for a week. It is run off by a further piping, and the cart going to the other side of the building receives a weight of skim-milk equal to that brought in, minus the percentage deducted as cream.

In the mean time the cream pumped upstairs has been subjected to a similar heating and cooling process before it runs into the great vat, say six feet long by two in depth and breadth, where it remains to ripen for churning. But this ripening process varies from day to day, and it is desirable to produce an artificial uniformity. So we arrive at a proceeding fit to make our grandmothers turn in their graves. Into the mass of cream is introduced a preparation of lactic acid ferment in a fluid state, and this stimulates or produces the working of micro-organisms. It is all right apparently; fermentation in wine is also the work of little beasts; and the old philosophers who saw in the universe nothing but a universal generative process of loves and hates had a glimpse farther than they knew. But when I was shown a dairymaid stirring up the tank of cream with a stick in order to give the bacteria air, I thought we had indeed come a long way from the cool dairy, the dashing churn, and the milk upon which a spell might be cast so that the butter would not come, churn you never so fiercely.

The creamery's churning is done, of course, by steam-power; and steam drives also the turning-table with its roller for crushing out of the butter the last drop of moisture, while the necessary touch of salt is added. Except for this pinch of salt, which the amateur cannot detect by taste in the finished product, nothing is added to the pure butter, and it goes out

in clean wooden boxes, all of one size, each containing an article perfectly uniform in quantity and quality.

On a second visit I saw the process of testing. Once a fortnight the bottle containing each man's fourteen samples is taken up and shaken, ten minims of it is drawn into a tube and mixed with eleven of sulphuric acid and one of fusel oil: then twenty-four of these tubes are spun round in a turbine, and you find in each the butter-fat formed at the top of the tube, to be read off on the scale marked on the glass. I saw two samples of milk tested, and the percentage varied so much that whereas one would only receive for his fortnight's supply 3½d. a gallon, the other got about four-fifths of a penny more. Thus milk is paid for according to quality as well as quantity, and the devices of a man who should have "a bad mind," and water his supply, would only result in his own confusion. The farmers, however, do not all understand this process, and the man with a bad mind occasionally gives trouble, as this communication, addressed to the central office of the Society, will show:—

"SIR,—There was a man sending in milk, and we suspected him of watering. We had the analysis taken, and it showed twenty-five per cent of water. We told him he should be ashamed of himself, and he came to the committee, and he knocked down two members of the committee and blacked their eyes. Sir, what are we to do?"

However, that is not a typical incident. Much more illustrative of the whole movement and its effects is the case of some people whom I have known all my life. They were buying their tea at 2s. 4d. a pound, although, as they well knew, they could get it by post for 1s. 10d. But the man with whom they dealt took their butter and eggs, and if they left him he might leave them. Now if my friend was sending his milk to the creamery, and his eggs to a depot, he need not consider the feelings of the local dealer. And, even as things were, he benefited by the creamery, for the dealer who used to give 6d. a pound now had to go up to 8d., owing to the inducement to small farmers to join the creamery.

The large farmer gains by dealing with the creamery. He can have his butter made for him, and made of the right type, and pasteurised; but still without the creamery he can probably get about the same price for it—though in stating that fact he always omits to allow for the labour spent in the making. But the man with two or three cows has no proper way of working, and has a very uncertain market, whereas the creamery will pay him, gallon for gallon, as much as it pays the big man, will extract as much butter from thirteen gallons as he could from eighteen, and will sell it for him at nearly 1s. instead of at 8d. a pound.

So much for creameries. But in the backward "mountainy" parts of the country, where I was going, creameries are scarcely possible: there is no sufficient pasture. That was what an old man with a peaked and shrivelled face like a fairy's,

who got into the carriage at Donegal, explained to me. Partly that, and partly, he said, the people about the Finn valley were wiser than the mountainy people. Like most of the old folk, he was distrustful of the new ideas. Spraying potatoes, he said, had done no good that year. As for land banks, he had heard of them; he, and his wife too, had heard of depots for the co-operative sale of eggs and poultry; but they thought the new breeds of fowl inferior to the old. Still, like every one else in the country, they had heard of, and were canvassing, the new projects; and at Killybegs, not many miles off, the projects were in operation.

There was first of all an agricultural bank—and it is to these banks that the Society attaches most importance. If a man joins a creamery, he goes in for his own advantage. If he takes a hand in the working of a rural bank, he is working less for himself than for his neighbours. At Killybegs, as in most other places, the priest was the president and the schoolmaster the secretary. It was the schoolmaster, with whom I spent my evening in the parlour of a comfortable inn, and he, like my shopkeeper at Killygordon, took the tone of a pioneer. The bank subsisted on a capital of £50 subscribed locally, and £50 more advanced by the Board. It is part of the Board's functions to make loans, but this function it delegates when it can, since, where there is no rural bank, it may spend a considerable sum in payment of railway expenses for an investigator, in order to make a loan of £5. These hundred pounds are employed by a committee of farmers and others in small loans to known men and for known purposes. The borrower comes to the secretary and produces the names of two sureties, who must answer for it—first, that the man will repay; and secondly, that the money will be applied to a productive purpose. Take two cases. In one a loan of £20—a most unusually large sum—was made to a road contractor. Payments were due by him, and to make them he must either borrow or else sell live stock at an unfavourable moment. The loan tided him over, and was punctually repaid. But by borrowing the man became a member of the bank, jointly responsible with every other member to the full extent of the bank's liabilities, and therefore actively interested in the repayment of every loan. The second case is more typical. A man owning a couple of fields had sold a cow to pay his rent, and had no money with which to re-stock; but for the bank, the grass was going to waste. He borrowed £10, paid 18s. for a pair of "suckers," and £8, 13s. for a pair of young beasts. The pigs he sold in four months for £4, 10s., the heifers he sold in ten months for £20. He then repaid his loan, which with interest at 6 per cent made ten guineas, and was left with £14 to the good. That is an instance of what it may mean to a peasant to have the command of capital. But, as the school-

master was careful to tell me, in this instance the man was advised by his surety, a very shrewd farmer, both as to the purchases and as to the time of sale. The rural bank was in that way a means for a neighbour to help a neighbour in a semi-public capacity. Once a-month regularly the committee of farmers tramp in to the meeting-place—the schoolhouse—and discuss the loans to be made. Some attend more regularly, some less, but the secretary told me with glee how at the annual audit he produced a record of attendances, and proposed that new men should be elected in place of those who had been slack. It was a sting, and the men touched by it instantly promised amendment and begged to be kept on: they were aroused to competition in the display of public spirit.

That is the essence of the matter, and the chief of the Society's organisers — a poet and a mystic who displays daily a practical capacity that would excite the envy of most business men—told me that the wilder and the poorer the district the more susceptible were the people to an appeal of this kind. At one little place in Galway an impassioned speech in Irish was delivered by a member of the committee upon the text of the yearly balance-sheet, which showed the incomings and outgoings of the various little loans minutely accounted for, with a trifling profit to the bank, and an item for working expenses that did not reach 5s. "They say the Irish have no capacity for business!" he exclaimed — "that balance-sheet casts back the slander in their teeth." And in a sense, although it was a big word for transactions dealing in all with a sum of £150, he was right. When the Irish can be brought to attend to their business, they have a fine ability for it; and it is no easy matter to manage one of these little banks. A fortnight later I was fishing on a grey, cold evening by the shivering reeds at the head of a lake, and another bank-secretary was sitting in the bow of the boat telling me of his trials. At first there was application after application from the most hopeless cases — the men who caught at any straw—and there were people on the committee who thought of the whole as a charity. That committee was strong in one respect, for it included the priest, the rector, and the Presbyterian clergyman; but it was weak in the vital point, for the farmers, who had real knowledge of every man's character and circumstances, held aloof. There was little thanks to be got, so my friend told me, by standing out for the principle that you should only help those who can help themselves; but still he stood out for it. And if he had got little good of the movement in that way, in another he had gained everything, for it had brought him in touch with the organiser I spoke of, and his eyes shone at the mention of the poet and enthusiast who had drawn out the confession of his own poetry and his own enthusiasm.

It was not in Donegal, however, that I came upon the most flourishing growths of the Society's planting. Down in Mayo I had ridden out with rods strapped on my bicycle to fish for white trout in a little lough that lies at the foot of Nephin. As to the fishing, perhaps the less said the better: a bright sun and strong northerly wind never yet helped a fly-rod, and in the hour before lunch I only got a couple of brown trout—just enough to make, when supplemented by a couple of fresh eggs, hot potatoes, whisky and milk, the ideal luncheon for a day's outing. And if the fishing was poor, there was all the more temptation to talk generalities to the pleasant young keeper who rowed me, or rather drifted with me down the south shore, while the sun made a dazzle on the water in front of us, and away beyond the end of the lake Croagh Patrick rose, a great cone, reminding me of pleasant days in the *Granuaile*, while I was learning what the Congested District Board had done for the dwellers by the sea. What did my keeper think about the Board, he who lived by the land, quite a large landholder for that district with his fifteen acres? Did he think, like one old man in Carrick, that "the Congests were nothing at all but the ruin of the country"? Not he. It was the Board chiefly that had introduced the spraying, and if it was not for the spraying in this wet season there would not be a stalk left on the potato-fields. He had seen one man's field green still, and with even a sign of flower on it, but in it were two rigs where everything above ground was rotten and dead by the middle of August. What was the matter with them? The man had sprayed, but "the stuff gave out," and he would not be at the trouble to fetch more. Another year he would know better. What about rural banks? Yes, surely there was a bank, and great good it had done. His own cousin was the secretary of it. Was it the Board that had started it? No, he thought it was some kind of "committee." He recognised the Society's name fast enough when I told it him, but the name of the man who came round and started the bank he did not need to be told. Here, as everywhere else, the priest had addressed his people from the altar, and told them there was a gentleman that had things to say to them that they would do well to listen to, and the first work of the propaganda had been done outside the chapel—by a Catholic among Catholics for Ireland, with no taint or suspicion of any party purpose. (Are there really many Unionists who, like Mr Horace Plunkett's dissident constituents, hold that for a Unionist to support such a movement is a touching of the accursed thing?)

The ride home was long, though my basket with the few stray white and brown trout picked up in the afternoon was no burden, and the keeper earnestly commended me on my way back to call upon the parish priest, for he was greatly interested in all this

work. I found him — seven miles off—in his trim thatched house, ready and willing to tell me all he could. He lived down in a village considerably nearer civilisation, and, as usual, the more backward parts of his huge parish were the more forward in the movement. Up in Glenhest, where I had fished, the people sprayed always twice, and sometimes a third time: in his own part they were apt to be content with once, and that unskilfully done, and this brought the remedy into disrepute. But his own potato-patch was there for an object-lesson, even if they did not see the mountainy men's thriving crops. The story was the same with the rural bank, — that also was more advanced in Glenhest. But even where he was, there was a bank with a capital of £250,—part supplied by some religious fund of the parish, part by the Board, part by private loans, and part — an important fact — borrowed on security of the co-operative bank from one of the ordinary banks in Ballina. This £250 did not suffice to meet the demands for loans from deserving applicants. Every penny was always out in loans of under £5, and every penny was punctually repaid. No bad debts, the bank borrowing at 4 per cent and lending at 5; working expenses more than covered by the difference; capital made available to every man who had feed for a pig, or sheep, or a cow, and lacked the money to buy it: there you have the whole theory and practice of the Raiffeisen banks as they exist in hundreds of parishes in prosperous little states like Würtemberg, and by ones and twos in a few backward corners of Ireland.

And, let it be emphatically stated, the work of which I am now speaking had not been done by the Congested Districts Board, but by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. And this was not all. The people were combining — but especially in Glenhest—to buy manures and seeds direct from the producers. The question of creameries had been raised but set aside, as the milk-supply appeared too small. The project of a poultry depot and egg-store had also been mooted, but deferred as useless because in Ballina there was the agent of a wholesale Liverpool dealer who gave excellent prices—1s. a dozen for eggs as against 8d. to be got from the local grocer-publican. By one means or another this outlying district was being brought into touch with the great food markets; and its people were being taught, where no means existed of bringing their goods individually to these markets in the proper form, how to accomplish this by co-operation.

Space fails, and there are other things to write of. But it should be emphasised too that the main purpose of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society has been not to create new industries but to organise and systematise the one already existing — the characteristic Irish industry of agriculture. It has done the work which, in France, Denmark, Canada, and a dozen other countries that can be

named, is being done by a State department; and the efforts of its promoters have brought into being such a department for Ireland also. The Society spent in nine years £15,000 of subscriptions. This neither can last nor ought to last. It is the business of the Department, if it does not supersede the Society, to subsidise it; and in doing so it would follow the example set in Denmark, which, of all agricultural countries, makes the most of its resources.

Leaving agriculture, something must be said of the endeavour not merely to develop old industries but to implant and organise new ones. As I came up out of Glencolumbkille walking with my friend, a lame glensman, who reads the newspapers to that wild Irish-speaking community, — and preaches spraying to them in season and out, — I said something as to my lack of faith in cottage industries, such as knitting and weaving. He turned round, and pointing up the broad valley, dotted thickly with cottages, he said, "Do you see those houses? If 90 per cent of the people were able to stay in them, these last years, it was the needle that kept them there." The Manchester School, whom Mr Gladstone, in a rare moment of insight, relegated to the cheerless planet, say these people would be better in America. *Solitudinem faciunt.* I do not believe that the trade in hand-knitting can continue to compete with machines. The Donegal homespuns are scarcely a commercial article as yet, though they may become so as well as the Harris tweeds. But in Glencolumbkille the main industry is the crochet, the "sprigging," and the lace; and if these industries are a permanent stand-by in Belgium and on the Genoese seaboard for the women, there is no reason why they should not be in Ireland, for nowhere in the world are there defter fingers. But the essential thing about all this newly developed industry is, that the workers in these glens and mountains are now at the parting of the ways. If they have the character to develop industrial habits, capital will come and organise their labour. It was no advantage of situation that made Belfast, but the settlement of some Huguenot weavers. There is no reason why cotton factories should work in Lancashire, but that the hand-weavers had already the settled habit of work, more important even than their inherited skill. Already the shirt-making trade, of which Derry is the great centre, has outposts at Stranorlar, on the fringe of the mountainy parts, and if there prove to be willing workers, it will spread fast enough, for linen industries can be established with a capital outlay of £10 per worker. Woollen industries need a larger initial expense—estimated to me by an expert at £150 for every hand that is to be employed.

Yet the most interesting of these experiments in Donegal deals with the woollen trade. A member of the Congested Districts Board fell in with Mr Morton of the famous

Darvel carpet-making firm, and heard of his factories at work in remote parts of the Highlands. Why should not the same be done in the West of Ireland? he asked; and Mr Morton was willing to make the experiment if a place could be found with railway and sea communication. Killybegs was pitched upon, and the work was started in a provisional way—the Board guaranteeing a considerable sum if, at the expiration of two years, it seemed unprofitable to go on with it. But there was no want of workers with fingers that naturally took to the swift, deft work, and the expiration of the two years found the firm completing a fine factory. It was only newly opened when I passed through, and I was luckly enough to meet Mr Morton himself—an employer of artistic labour with all the instincts of an artist. What struck him most was, it seemed to me, the inborn artistic sense of the Irish peasants, their manifest pleasure in watching the pattern grow on the loom; and next to that, the fact that the hills about the district were exactly fit to feed the right class of sheep and produce the right wool. So far, the sheep were not there, and for the present the wool was imported dyed. But the factory was still incomplete, and dyeing-rooms were being erected. In the end Mr Morton's purpose was to make the people grow their own wool, spin it, dye it, and weave it into his carpets, thus getting the virtue out of the hills, and keeping the folk on the ground instead of sending them to the States or elsewhere to herd in big towns.

Coming away from Carrick a week later, I went in to look at the factory, and a prettier sight it would be hard to find. There was a great room, perhaps 200 feet by 150, lit like a studio, clear, clean, with pine-boarded walls. At the farther end were the looms—nine of them—with seven or eight girls sitting in a row before each; and beyond the looms were piled the great masses of rich coloured wool—reds, greens, blues, and browns; and on every loom rose the rich glow of the costly carpet. You would no more go there to buy cheap conveniences than you would have gone to Morris: on one loom a carpet was being worked for the Queen, a memento of her Irish visit, and there was at least one other in progress which seemed to me finer both in quality and design. But the beauty of the place lay in the human factor,—the rows of young girls set there, bareheaded, against this gorgeous backing. They were not Irish speakers, for all came from Killybegs or just outside it—day-workers—and though at Carrick, ten miles off, folk are curiously imperfect in their English, Killybegs is beyond the Gaelic-speaking limit. But they were of pure Irish race, as was plain enough to see, for four in every five had hair varying from the darkest brown to blue-black; and as most of them were young lasses of sixteen—and some quite wee cutties—the hair was mostly loose down their backs or knotted with a bright ribbon. The play of life and movement that no picture

can give was on the living picture as one watched them sitting, still, yet ceaselessly in motion, as they talked and laughed and plied their fingers in the swift knotting of the loops, or hammered the web together. They were mostly still learners: at the end of each row was one more skilful than the rest, who directed; but no one is yet really on the true level of a skilled worker, for the work is paid by the piece, and the most that any girl has yet earned in the week of fifty-three hours is 9s. From 6s. to 7s. 6d. would be the average; but the wages of a labouring man in most parts of Donegal never goes beyond 1s. 6d. a-day. It happened to be a Saturday when I called, and I watched the sixty workers come up, shy and smiling, to answer the roll and take their earnings: none seemed other than content. Soon the list will be longer, for a room is being constructed for the shearing and dressing of the carpets that come from the loom, and that will mean more work. An electric light installation, too, will be ready before the dark days set in, and Killybegs will be as well lit as if it were in Italy, not in Great Britain.

In short, that factory is a centre of civilisation of the very most desirable kind, and if the people of that wild country are ever to be taught in their own homes the lesson that they learn reluctantly elsewhere—"to be for ever watching the handle of the clock," as the old grumbler at Carrick put it—they cannot learn it in a more civilising way. But until they have learnt that lesson, no man can be expected to risk capital in industrial enterprise among them, and it is the work of a State department to encourage capital to come there. At the beginning of things the capitalist as well as the labourer has to be subsidised; and if any think this a treason to the economic creed, let him remember that industries and arts which were for centuries fostered by legislation in England and Scotland were during that same period strangled and stamped out by legislation in Ireland.

An Englishman who had spent twenty years as a clergyman in different parts of Donegal said to me this summer, "Whatever the Irish are, they are not idlers." What they lack most sadly is public spirit, and the faith in public spirit. And wherever a rural bank is proposed, or a poultry store, or a creamery, the belief is always held and expressed at first by the peasants that some one is engineering the scheme in order to make money out of it. And it is distressing to find very similar traits appearing in a more educated class among Mr Horace Plunkett's ultra-Unionist constituents. Every man, the proverb says, imputes himself; and the imputations brought against Mr Plunkett reflect upon the character of those who cannot recognise, when they see it, good work not merely designed but achieved for the service of Ireland.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL SITUATION IN SCOTLAND.

IN the course of the next two or three months the public will certainly be treated to many ingenious dissertations upon the performances of the fast-expiring century and the prospects of the new one. Many well-worn themes will be presented in what is intended to be a novel light: moralising will be rampant, and there will be a diligent wagging of more or less sapient heads. Once again shall we be called upon to listen to the thrice-told triumphs of steam and electricity—to surfeit ourselves, as it were, with the records of the locomotive and the telegraph-wire. Sir William Turner has already predicted the conquest of fresh worlds by the votaries of science; and Sir Walter Besant is sure to have something to say about the growth of the reading public, and the boundless vistas of wealth opened up thereby before the industrious, illiterate, and popular author. Ministers of all denominations will employ much heated and superfluous rhetoric in proving that, while on the one hand there is much to be thankful for, on the other there is much to deplore. Optimists will chortle in their joy, and pessimists will groan in despair. These will tell us of growing vulgarity, of perverted ideals, of depraved tastes as ingenuously as if similar charges had not been punctually levelled against every generation of mankind in turn. Those will point to increased facilities for locomotion, to the penny post, to the wider diffusion of wealth and the higher standard of comfort, as though a man's life consisted in the abundance of his possessions. We are not, however, to anticipate further the labours of our instructors and guides, or to attempt to hold the balance between contending views. The nineteenth century, like many another, has been "ower bad for blessing and ower gude for banning." Each period of a hundred years is very apt to leave the characters of men precisely where it found them. Yet we may venture to take heart for the future from the unmistakable symptoms of being still "sound at bottom" which during the last twelvemonth the country has disclosed. And we may further congratulate ourselves upon the fact that, thanks to the events of this current year, certain institutions, venerable on account neither of age nor of honesty, will not encumber the march of the succeeding century. Happily for the world, the map of 1901 will be ignorant of an Orange "Free State" and a "South African Republic." Also, to turn from great things to small, from the affairs of the empire to the affairs of the parish, by the close of the present month the existence of that singular and delusive phantom the "Church of Scotland Free" will have been terminated with every circumstance of formality.

The very name is a sufficient indication of the lofty pretensions put forward by those who engineered the schism of 1843. Theirs was no secession, but a disruption, and Mr Gladstone conceived the latter to be "the more just appellation." They were not a band of mischief-makers bent upon divisive courses, but the true Church, severing all connection with a usurping and God-denying State. Yet, while thus protesting, alike by word and action, against Erastianism, they adhered stoutly to the principle that it was the duty of the civil magistrate to support a religious establishment and its corollary —an endowed territorial ministry. We should have thought it needless to reiterate these well-known facts, were it not that certain legal luminaries of the Free Church have recently been so rash as to deny them. The favourite method of reconciling the apostasy of the sons with the faith of the fathers used to be a variation of that instructive doctrine of development by which, for example, the late Mr Gladstone was in the habit of proving that he had never altered a single opinion in his life.[1] But such a mode of demonstrating that black is white is tedious and subtle. We know it to have been a maxim of Captain Swosser, speaking in his figurative naval manner, that when you make pitch hot you cannot make it too hot, and that if you only have to swab a plank, you should swab it as if Davy Jones were after you. Acting on this laudable principle, the apologists for the modern Free Church tell us roundly that Chalmers was a Voluntary, and that, though in some vague and indefinite sense the Free Church recognises the duty of the State to encourage religion, she is in no wise pledged to what is technically called a religious establishment. According to this reading of the Free Church creed, Cæsar has performed his duty if he has looked the other way while Peter Poundtext and Ephraim M'Briar were expounding the Word. It may be that, upon a microscopic examination of the documents of the Free Church, this construction may possess some slight plausibility. Such, indeed, was not the opinion of the late Lord Rutherfurd Clark, then Solicitor-General, when the papers were submitted to him in 1873. But in any event the articles of association of a religious body ought not, in dealing with broad questions of principle and policy, to be construed in a pettifogging spirit and upon niggling canons which no competent court of law would bring

[1] We may remind the reader of an eminently characteristic and pleasing episode in that eminent statesman's later years. When the General Assembly of the Free Church was celebrating its jubilee in 1893, Mr Gladstone wrote a delightful letter to the Moderator, stating that the Disruption, with the circumstances of the preceding decade, was still fresh in his recollection, and had "at all times been regarded by him with lively and sympathising interest." Unluckily, some black-hearted person was base enough to discover that in March 1843 Mr Gladstone, then a member of the Peel administration, had voted against Mr Fox Maule's motion in favour of considering the petition of the General Assembly. The rejection of that resolution was the signal for secession.

to bear upon the constitution of a joint-stock company. That the Free Church, as well by its own standards as by the solemn declarations of its founders, is bound hand and foot to the establishment principle is a sufficiently accurate statement of fact. To hold anything else is to do a substantial disservice to the memory of Chalmers and Candlish. For if, in truth, the connection of the Church with the State was for them an open question, how justify their holding aloof from the Seceders who in 1847 became incorporated under the name of the United Presbyterian body? How defend the outrageous expenditure of money which erected meeting-houses all over the country to an extent far in excess of the religious requirements of the community? No: whether they were right in so believing, or whether they were wrong, we are compelled to the view that Chalmers and Candlish believed that in the constitution of the Church of Scotland, whether "Free" or in chains, there was some deposit of principle forbidding a union with sects which, however conspicuous for evangelical fervour, omitted to assert the duty of the State to establish and endow the Church.

Be all this as it may, the die is cast, and in the future there will be no room for ambiguity. The Free Church henceforward will cease to pose as the national Zion testifying bravely against backsliding on the right hand and falling away on the left, against Erastianism on the one side and Voluntaryism on the other. She will become in name what she has ever been in fact—a mere dissenting body, and the "United Free Church of Scotland" will merely afford another illustration of the inevitable tendency which dogs all sorts of seceders. For the story of the decadence of the Free Church, of the abatement of her high, though ill-founded, claims, is not unique. It is merely the tale of the Secession and the Relief over again. These denominations, which the United Presbyterians now represent, separated themselves from the Church of Scotland, not because in their view the civil magistrate had no business to support the cause of true religion, but because in a carnal and ungodly age that officer was much too remiss in discharging his duty. He tolerated Episcopacy; he winked at dancing; he no longer attempted to suppress witchcraft in the fearless old fashion. To recapitulate the manner in which the seceding bodies split up and reunited — how there arose Burghers and Antiburghers, Old Lights and New Lights, and how these deposed and excommunicated one another with the utmost complacency and satisfaction — would be to enter upon an extremely tangled tale. It is enough to note that, as time went on, the prospects of the civil magistrate being brought to a proper sense of his responsibilities grew darker. Witchcraft, even, had long ceased to be a burning (or a drowning) question. And so, in 1820 or thereabouts, most of the various sects composed their differences, amalgamated their

businesses, and proceeded to conduct their affairs upon that voluntary theory, the miserable insufficiency of which afforded to Dr Chalmers so constant a subject for eloquent and indignant expostulation. The process of "development" in the Free Church has been not dissimilar. While the residuary Establishment (we omit the usual blasphemous and objurgatory epithets with which the Disruption "worthies" used to garnish their speech in dealing with that soul-destroying institution)—while the Establishment, we say, still tottered from the blow of 1843, it was easy to play at being the National Church emancipated from the fetters of the State. But when, owing to the exertions of Robertson of Ellon and others, the true National Church began to raise her head and to resume her hold upon the people of Scotland, it became quite another thing. The temptation grew stronger to put a good face upon the matter, like the fox that had lost his tail, and the happiness of being "free" and (nominally) unendowed came to be a frequent ground of self-congratulation. Nay, so convinced was the mutilated quadruped of the superiority of his later over his former situation, that, in a spirit of true benevolence, he invoked the aid of no less a personage than Cæsar to perform a similar amputation upon his established brother,—a compliment which the latter has been unaccountably slow to appreciate. The consciousness that they were farther than ever from the realisation of their old ultramontane ideal of a State badgered and bullied by the Church, coupled with the knowledge that in the struggle for numerical supremacy, at all events, the dissenting denominations had been, not merely caught up, but hopelessly outdistanced, by the Auld Kirk, was probably the primary influence in seducing the bulk of the Free Church ministers from their ostensible principles. What further consideration may have led them to the frank avowal of their unfaithfulness we shall see by-and-by. As matters now stand, the portion of the legacy bequeathed to them by the men of '43, which they most jealously, though no doubt unconsciously, guard, is the more than *soupçon* of self-righteousness, the conviction that the members of the Free Church are the very salt of the earth. This feeling is none the less genuine that it finds expression no longer in the crude form either of self-praise or of invective and insult (only a few of the more stupid cling to that tradition), but rather in ostentatiously charitable and patronising observations upon the Church of Scotland, as, for example, that it would be wrong to deny that a certain measure of blessing has been vouchsafed to her ministrations, or that it would be unsafe to affirm that the divine approval has been wholly withheld from the efforts of her ministers, or other amiable remarks to the like effect.

It is fair to say that the process of conversion in the Free Church has occupied a tolerably long time. More than a quarter of a century has elapsed since the first unsuccessful overt attempt at Union; and the

advocates of amalgamation may be complimented at least upon indefatigable patience and persistency. The great mass of the laity has never been enthusiastic in the cause, and, besides stolid indifference, a vast amount of dogged opposition had at one time to be overcome. How the end has at length been achieved—by what wheedling here, by what bullying there—need not be detailed. Such matters belong to the great region of ecclesiastical intrigue, the rules of which we do not presume to criticise, for indeed they are much beyond the comprehension of the ordinary layman. The average man, approaching them with an open mind, might readily be betrayed into coarse and hasty expressions of disapproval; and such disapproval must, of course, be unwarranted, for have not these rules all been elaborated by good men? In effect, we doubt whether Rome herself has ever produced anything superior in astuteness, and what a mere worldling would describe as the gift for sharp practice, to what the Free Church may boast of in her leaders during the last thirty years. We shall be on a less elevated and dizzy plane in commenting upon the decline of the "constitutional" party, once so powerful, now sunk so low. Dr Begg was not a man of the highest ability, though his personality had about it somewhat of the commanding. Dr Kennedy's peculiar modes of thought were more congenial to the Highlands than to the Lowlands. Yet these divines served as leaders for rallying those among the laity who were loth to abandon Free Church principles; and since their removal the party which they led in the church courts has been steadily dwindling and melting away like snow-wreaths in spring. Above all, it has failed to evolve a capable and competent leader. Whenever a leader *in posse* appeared, he was quietly detached by some well-timed piece of flattery, or by the offer, if not of a ribbon to stick in his coat, at all events of the sub-convenership of the Committee on Choir-practising or Pulpit Cushions. Even the swashbucklers of the party—and it had one or two, able to make rousing speeches and crack passable jokes—deserted it, appalled by the grim prospect, always so distressing to swashbucklers, of being on the losing side. And now the Constitutionalists are as sheep without a shepherd, practically powerless even in the Highlands, and reduced to uttering an occasional meek and plaintive wail through the medium of the daily press—a striking picture of demoralisation, a solemn warning how ill a good cause may fare in unskilful and feeble hands. If the United Kingdom had been defended with the same lack of purpose and in the same spirit of fatalism fourteen years ago, Ireland had long ere now rejoiced in an independent Parliament.

An apathetic Free Church laity, then, has been cajoled and jockeyed into acquiescing in the Union by a course of procedure which we assume to have been entirely regular and

in order. No plebiscite, to be sure, has been taken, for to take a plebiscite would be to violate true-blue "Presbyterian principles." We could wish, parenthetically, that the promoters of the Union would condescend to recollect these same principles when they are hobnobbing with English sectaries, and "exchanging pulpits" with Independents. The United Presbyterian laity have also acquiesced, though they too are destitute of enthusiasm. The reason of this indifference is not very far to seek. Every candid and sensible member of either body is perfectly well aware that the extremely plausible and possibly sound reasons which may be alleged for the movement are not in reality those which have inspired the conduct of its promoters. A good deal of nonsense is often talked about the wickedness of "ascribing motives" to people. A motive must always be matter of conjecture or inference for the looker-on, and it sometimes even escapes the attention of the actor himself. But if ever a course of speech and action consistently pointed to one motive, and one only, the public utterances and conduct of the Free Church and United Presbyterian leaders indicate, as the true motive of the Union, the desire to furnish the liberationist armoury with a new and formidable weapon. The union of the two bodies deprives the defender of the Church of the taunt that the dissenters are unable to settle their own disputes, and enables the assailant to enlarge upon the "grave scandal" that two ecclesiastical corporations, identical in creed and forms of worship, should remain apart because one obstinately adheres to the State connection. It is, of course, only a very few ardent and untamed spirits who have clumsily blurted out the secret in so many words; but we venture to predict that it will require no very close reading between the lines, and no harsh or forced interpretation, to extract it from the chorus of exultation amid which the completion of the Union will presently be accomplished at Edinburgh. In these circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that the mass of the laity should remain unmoved; for a laity which has not breathed regularly the atmosphere of ecclesiastical courts is apt to be candid, and to dislike self-deception.

While, however, there can be little doubt that the wish to provide a fresh lever for the demolition of the National Church has powerfully actuated the most prominent champions of the Union, it is by no means certain that, in spite of all their acuteness and ingenuity, they have not for once overreached themselves. For one thing, it is to be observed that in the new body it will be quite open to any member to advocate establishment and endowment to his heart's content, and the remnant of the old Constitutionalists will have the opportunity of continuing to lift up their testimony on behalf of those excellent causes, let us hope with more force and energy than heretofore. We shall,

moreover, be much surprised if we do not hear from some of the abler and more independent among the young clergy, who during the sittings of the last Free Church Assembly had the courage to take a line of their own in the Disestablishment debate. While in favour of Disestablishment *sub specie æternitatis*, so to speak, they deplore the manner in which the Free Church as a body has been committed to, and mixed up with, the political movement towards that end. They feel that the active pursuit of such an object by the Free Church has not merely tended to distract her ministers from their proper work, but has seriously impaired their usefulness by laying them open to imputations which, however groundless, were inevitable, and the risk of which ought never to have been incurred. In taking up this position, we are satisfied that the ministers in question accurately represented the feeling of the greater part of the congregations, who no longer individually bear any ill-will to the Established Church. It seems probable that, as time goes on, this view will come to be expressed with greater distinctness and emphasis. The Disestablishment wire-puller has outlived his day. How different his position now from what it was when, twice a-week or so, he waited with a deputation upon Mr Gladstone! The younger men, by whom the shoes of Dr Rainy and Mr Innes must some day be filled, may perhaps realise that the religious interests of Scotland can best be subserved by a policy of live-and-let-live. Despite her apparent prosperity, no institution has suffered so much from the Disestablishment agitation as the Free Church herself.

It would have been strange had it been otherwise, for no more sordid and squalid movement has recently been recorded in our political history. On the one side, ministers of the Gospel bringing their votes and influence into the market-place; on the other, statesmen bidding for their support by undertaking to cripple, if not to destroy, an ancient national institution. The history of Mr Gladstone's dealings with the Church of Scotland since the first Mid-Lothian campaign is a record of unblushing duplicity and turpitude which even he rarely surpassed. Nothing could have been worse than the spirit in which the Disestablishment campaign has been prosecuted by the political dissenters. The principle that liberationists have a vested interest in the abuses of the establishment has been openly avowed and consistently acted upon. The abolition of patronage was a shameful blow struck by Cæsar at the dissenting communities. The attempt to rectify the incidence of ecclesiastical assessments and to ascertain and fix the weight of the heritors' burden is an unwarrantable and cruel attack upon the rights and privileges of the separated Presbyterians. But the unprincipled nature of the liberationist tactics, as well as the key to the motive which prompts them, comes out even more clearly in connection with disendowment than with disestablishment. Had Dr Rainy

and Dr Hutton come forward and said, Let the *concordat* with the State be readjusted to suit our views, but let the Church of Scotland, in any case, retain her endowments, the Disestablishment controversy might long ago have been closed. But for your true liberationist disestablishment without disendowment has no charm; and accordingly the monstrous proposal is that the Church of Scotland should be stripped of her endowments, and the dissenting Churches should retain theirs. If the objection to endowments be rested upon the source whence the endowment flows, or is supposed to flow, the Free Church is as guilty as the Established of taking the money of the State for religious purposes. She has accepted, and has for years been instrumental in maintaining, a system of education under which the money of the ratepayer and the taxpayer is applied to the support of strictly denominational religious teaching. If the objection to endowments be based upon their supposed evil effect, irrespective of their source, the liberationist contention proves too much. The Free Church is richly endowed not merely in respect of money but also in respect of stone and lime. Every church and manse free of debt is an endowment. And when it is urged that the Church of Scotland would benefit spiritually by being plundered of the remains of her patrimony, we shall believe in the good faith and benevolence of her *soi-disant* friends if, and only if, they give an undertaking that the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church will apply a like stimulus to their own activity and liberality by handing over to the parish councils the whole of their property, heritable and movable, real and personal. Until that proposal is seriously made, we shall take the liberty of doubting whether the troublers of Israel are as thoroughly satisfied of the demoralising effect of endowments as they profess to be.

Let us, accordingly, indulge the hope that, when the cheering and the excitement are all over, the "United Free Church of Scotland" will settle down to a steady routine of useful work, eschewing envy and malice, with other disagreeable and unseemly passions, and leaving the Church of Scotland to take care of herself and attend in peace to her own affairs. There is ample work for both bodies to perform; and as regards that one whose appellation is United, the new arrangement, if worked judiciously and in a business-like spirit, should effect a much-needed economy in ecclesiastical energy, and prevent the "overlapping" which has been going on for years.

As regards the Church of Scotland, she has a great opportunity before her; but her most loyal sons cannot disguise from themselves that there are perils ahead from which it will require careful guidance to secure her extrication. Her great danger at present seems to arise from the want of a leader. There is no man of signal ability — nor has there been since Tulloch's death—with a definite policy, with well-matured views, with the knowledge

of what he wants and the determination to get it, to lead the General Assembly. It is not merely on the question of Church defence that guidance is required. The feeble attempts made to propitiate the dissenters in the past (of which perhaps that bulky and somewhat mixed compilation known as the "Church Hymnary" represents the most futile) prove how sadly the Church has lacked the direction of a really strong man. Other questions are pressing for solution. Whether, and by what means, the parochial system may safely be made more elastic;[1] how candidates for the ministry may best be trained for their office; how the Presbyterian form of Church government may be made as efficient in practice as it is symmetrical and admirable on paper; how the problem of the religious education of the young is to be solved,—these are a few of the questions to which an answer will have to be found, and which cannot be disposed of by the annual repetition of dreary jeremiads and well-worn platitudes in a disconsolate and helpless voice. What is needed is a man of spiritual enthusiasm, corrected by sound judgment; of ideals, tempered with a knowledge of business; of "vision," modified by an intimate acquaintance with human nature; of transparent honesty and candour, yet of statesmanship and tact. Such a leader has not yet arisen, nor do we observe any phenomena which foretell his immediate appearance. But the unexpected sometimes, if not always, happens.

Apart from the difficulties which we have already alluded to, there appear to us to be two matters which may cause trouble in the near future. One of these—the present system of popular election to parishes—*ought* to cause trouble, but the eradication of the evils which have intermingled themselves with the existing order of things is so formidable and ungrateful a task that it may well remain for long unattempted. Certain it is that the stoutest advocate of private patronage could scarcely have foreseen in all their deformity the miserable and degrading scandals which have followed upon the Act of 1874, and which have been calmly acquiesced in as natural if not necessary incidents in the choice of a minister by the members of the congregation. The other matter probably *will* cause trouble, though it need not. Certain restless members of Assembly are apparently bent upon stirring up questions as to the Church's standards and formularies, partly with a view to demonstrating her "spiritual independence," partly with a view to getting rid of

[1] It is sincerely to be hoped that the panacea of removing city churches to suburbs will not be adopted. "Following the population" means following the well-to-do. There is plenty work to the hand of the city ministers if they will only do it; and it has never been the practice of the Church of Scotland to "go where money is."

the Calvinistic theology, or, at all events, of the Calvinistic mode of presenting theology. Such activity seems to us eminently unseasonable and dangerous. The Westminister Confession may be an imperfect enough document, and in the view of many churchmen the Confession of Knox is very much preferable. But it has served the Church of Scotland for more than two hundred years, and before a clean sweep is made of it, we should like to know what is to take its place. Confession-making and creed-tinkering may be fascinating, but they are also perilous, pastimes; and we should shrink from even appearing to encourage that spirit of latitudinarianism which is one of the besetting dangers of the Church of Scotland, as the spirit of lawlessness and the hankering after Romish doctrine and practices are the besetting danger of the sister Church of England.

Our advice, then, to the clergy of the Church of Scotland would be, to continue quietly in their present course, to attend closely to their duties, and to let sleeping dogs lie. There will be much loose talk in the future about "Presbyterian Re-Union," and about Reunion generally. But talk does little good in the matter, except perhaps to bring out differences more sharply than before; and, as regards the more limited proposal for comprehension, the ardent and impetuous may be reminded that some of the reverend gentlemen who have bestowed their benison upon it are of the class with whom if one is to sup, one requires an uncommonly long spoon. As for the wider project, it would, indeed, be a sin and a shame if Presbyterian reunion ever passes into the sphere of "practical politics" without an earnest and deliberate effort having been made to include within the bounds of the enlarged communion that section of the Church of Scotland which was somewhat harshly extruded by the Revolution Settlement, and which, though it has by accident or choice become denationalised and exotic, is, from a historical point of view, as legitimate a descendant of the Church of Knox and of Leighton as the Establishment itself. Meanwhile, so long as the Scottish Episcopal Church maintains her present attitude with regard to orders (which she has, of course, a perfect right to do), no step towards formal alliance or actual amalgamation can be *taken*. Therefore, the less said about Union the better. A discreet silence need not imply other than absolutely friendly relations. As we have said, a policy of live-and-let-live is the best possible guarantee for the religious wellbeing of the country and of its various ecclesiastical organisations. For the Church of Scotland, at least, we are satisfied that the devotion of her ministers and office-bearers to their respective functions will, more than any other human device, secure that peace within her walls and that prosperity within her palaces which so many generations of her children have fervently invoked.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

CLIFFORD *v.* GRUNDY—THE MISFORTUNES OF THE ST JAMES'S THEATRE—AN ANCIENT SCANDAL—LITERARY SOMNAMBULISM—THE IDEAS OF THE AIR—THE CRIMINAL PLAGIARIST—A PLEA FOR LEGITIMATE PLAGIARISM—THE EXAMPLE OF VIRGIL, SHAKESPEARE, AND MOLIÈRE—THEIR JUSTIFICATION—THE MASTERPIECE OF THE CENTURY—MISS CORELLI AND 'THE MASTER-CHRISTIAN.'

MRS CLIFFORD has recently received a grievous buffet of fortune. She has been the victim of such a coincidence as will often assault those who are determined to please the public. In complete ignorance of each other's enterprise, she and Mr Grundy have been busily engaged in composing the same play. The resemblance is perfect down to the smallest details, and though the motive might easily have been found by an independent dozen, a spilt cup of tea, the symbol of emotion, and an S-shaped sofa are not everybody's properties. Nor need we be surprised that the hero of each play is a barrister: on the stage, as in fiction or in real life, professions have their fleeting popularity; and waiting the rehabilitation of the dragoon, the barrister may now claim the slippers of Berlin wool, once worked by pious fingers for the curate. Nevertheless, though much may be put down to a prevailing fashion, we are confronted by a similarity which seems to defy the laws of chance. One man and two women — these are the invariable elements of drama, unless, indeed, two men come to loggerheads over one woman. But the same scene, the same accent, the same tea-cup in the same trembling hand, and the same sofa, are an insoluble puzzle, which merely suggests the smallness of the world, the limitations of the human brain, and other platitudes.

And the coincidence does not end with the plays. The theatre at which Mr Grundy's work was produced is already the home of undesigned similarities. Twenty years ago Mr Hardy's "Far from the Madding Crowd" and Mr Pinero's "The Squire" jostled each other in a drawer at the St James's, and it is at least curious that "The Likeness of the Night" and "A Debt of Honour" should also have passed through the same theatre. Mr Grundy declares that all dramatists are digging in the same potato-patch, and Mr Clement Scott retorts that the potato-patch is "established in King Street, St James's." For ourselves, we should as soon presume to explain these amazing coincidences as to unravel the secret of the universal pattern, or to give a reason why the ancient Greeks told the very stories which delight the Solomon Islanders of to-day. After all, there is a

nearer kinship between Mrs Clifford and Mr Grundy than between Attica and the South Pacific. But the present problem may be stated in the same terms employed on another famous occasion, as thus: "A play read over at a theatre and rejected; another play ordered from another author for the same theatre and produced. Play No. 2 resembles in a very striking way play No. 1. The relations between several of the chief characters are identical in both pieces, and the characters themselves are much alike. . . . Given these facts, to find out how these characters and situations came into play No. 2." That is the problem, and the safest answer is, "Give it up."

When Mr Pinero produced "The Squire" at the same theatre which had rejected "Far from the Madding Crowd," the usual protests were made on either hand; but all the protests in the world, supported by extracts from notebooks and perfumed by "the scent of hay over the footlights," could not soften the coincidences nor convince the waverers. Whatever was the real truth—and the real truth will never be known—Mr Pinero's conduct was indefensible. According to the testimony of his manager, Mr Pinero had never read Mr Hardy's novel; by his subsequent confession, he had read it; and, though there is no guilt in being familiar with a masterpiece, it was plainly Mr Pinero's duty to have expunged the patent similarity from his play, if he did not suppress the whole work. Many an industrious copyist has before this laid claim to the works of others; and if two books or two plays resemble each other, he who wrote first, having an indefeasible claim, cannot be held responsible for another's echo. Some such argument as this, no doubt, has prevailed with Mr Pinero, who, by not including "The Squire" in the printed edition of his works, has deprived us of a leisurely and interesting comparison.

The previous case was rendered simpler by the already published book. Beneath the feet of Mrs Clifford and Mr Grundy there is no common ground save a story in 'Temple Bar' and a play of Scribe. We are, therefore, able to regard the coincidence in a merely speculative spirit, and to pretend that two dramatists stumbled upon the same theme in the same theatre by pure chance. But even the accidents of chance may sometimes be explained, and many answers have been proposed for this particular riddle. It is a case of literary somnambulism, says one; which is less an explanation than another statement of the case. We cannot believe that men walk like ghosts in the night, invading the studies of their rivals, and unconsciously appropriating words and thoughts which do not belong to them. But somnambulism is just as good a word as another for an obscure phenomenon, and at that we may leave it. On the other hand, those who declare that "ideas are in the air" do not speak without reason.

Ideas are in the air, especially in the close air of the theatre. The dramatist is not a creative artist; he is but an echo of the public, and he is prepared to answer the lightest whisper of his audience with a shout. Some time since the elder Dumas held our stage, and a dozen playwrights, innocent of conspiracy, dragged a dozen "Musketeers" from their desks. They did not copy each other; they merely felt the same prompting at the same time, and obeyed their masters with all the obedience natural to them. And to-day, when Dumas Fils and Ibsen have popularised the moral problem, suggesting in the first act a moral difficulty, which they resolve by suicide or otherwise in the last, it is not surprising that two dramatists should in the same month confront two women and a man. But the trembling tea-cup is left unexplained. Ideas may be in the air. We know that Adams and Leverrier made independent discoveries of Neptune; we know that Darwin and Wallace disclosed the secrets of evolution on the same day. But S-shaped sofas are not in the air, and Darwin and Wallace remain less of a puzzle than Mrs Clifford and Mr Grundy.

However, it does not matter. The two plays will be produced, compared, and discussed. The scandal of suspicion will quicken the public interest, and maybe neither author will regret these ominous similarities. But the dispute has once more raised the question of plagiarism, that vice which is grossly misunderstood and universally practised. He who steals a watch is a thief, and at first sight it seems obvious that he who steals a phrase or a thought is far wickeder than the swell-mobsman. But the obvious is not always true: a plagiarism cannot be so easily dismissed. Of course, there is such a personage as the criminal plagiarist, and he may easily be detected both by motive and performance. In the first place, he steals perforce from better men than himself, and he steals because his brain is too barren or too indolent to keep pace with his ambition. He aims at a literary reputation, and he can only hit the target by crooked methods. Naturally, also, he vulgarises that which he takes, and when charged with the offence, he declares that he has not read the works of his victim. Indeed, it is the true mark of the criminal plagiarist that he has read nothing. One specimen of the class has been known to assert that he never read 'Faust.' But this sublime ignorance is no excuse: in the first place, every man who takes up a pen to write should have read 'Faust,' and even if he has not he cannot help absorbing it through his pores. When, therefore, the plagiarist pleads ignorance, you may know him for a criminal, who has stealthily gone about to deceive the world, and to win an inglorious glory for himself. Yet he is merely a parasite upon literature. He does little harm, because he is easily destroyed, and because the sting which he inflicts is speedily cured. Though now and again he

appears in the theatre or at the circulating library, conviction follows his offence, and after conviction he disappears into the prison of forgetfulness.

But there is another kind of plagiarism, which needs no defence at our hands. In one sense the literature of the world may be described as a series of thefts. Tradition, the essence of art, is but a chain which binds lender and borrower together. A writer who owed nothing to the past would be a monster, and it is significant that no serious person, save Walt Whitman, ever attempted to invent a new method. And even he, though he despised the rules of his art, was under a deeper obligation than he acknowledged to the newspaper and the auctioneer's catalogue. In truth, the first step to originality is a knowledge of other men's masterpieces, for no writer, if he be not Mr Pinero, will help himself with both hands to a book which he has read; and Mr Grundy would have increased his reputation for originality if he had turned over Mrs Clifford's play in the 'Anglo-Saxon Review.' But since knowledge of others is necessary to originality, it follows that all men must, in their moments, be plagiarists. For no man, sensitive enough to write, is insensitive to influences. The result of study is half-conscious suggestion, and as Gibbon found his irony in Pascal, as Virgil found his measures in Homer, so everybody who is worth reading has taken what suited him from the past. "Ce sont les hommes, et non pas l'homme, qui inventent," said Dumas, with admirable truth; and it would be wiser, except in cases of gross and palpable theft, if the critics left parallel columns alone, and judged each work, no matter whence it was derived, on its merits. Above all, incidents are (or should be) common property. "Difficile est," said Horace, "proprie communia dicere," confessing in these words that what is falsely called originality is easier of attainment than the distinguished use of material sanctified by others. But woe unto him who, shamelessly and stealthily snatching what isn't his, proves unworthy of his spoil, who, when he should annex like a general, pilfers like a tramp.

The history of literature, then, is a history of plagiarism and unworthy charges. Scarcely a great man has escaped the reproach, and if the reproach were justified all would be guilty. Virgil, although he wrote "Sic vos non vobis," robbed Ennius as he chose, and answered the blame of the foolish with the arrogant retort: "I did but pick pearls from a dungheap." The creator of Hamlet, also, appeared to his contemporaries as a thief. Did he not take a plot here or a phrase there, and did he not make everything he touched eternally and absolutely his own? His depredations, in truth, were long since justified. Shakespeare, said Dryden in a superb sentence, "invades authors like a monarch," and with so fine a spirit was his in-

vasion conceived that he is still monarch of the earth. But we can imagine the laugh wherewith he greeted the charge of theft. How should he, who "after *le bon Dieu* has created the most," care what he took or whence he took it? One thing is certain, that whatever territory he seized was added to his empire, and it is only the rebel who would grudge this imperious levy laid upon the possessions of little men.

Molière, too, seized whatever seemed useful to his purpose. "Je prends mon bien où je le trouve," is but a civil version of Virgil's "pearls from a dungheap," and the Frenchman felt the reproach as lightly as the Roman. Yet it is not enough to turn away the charge with a jest or a laugh. Plagiarism, like invasion, must be justified by its result. A poet, like an emperor, may only annex that which he can make his own. He may take nothing that does not suit his talent and chime with his humour. It is true that Shakespeare and Molière in gaily appropriating the raw material of their dramas inflicted (maybe) an injury upon some smaller men. But literature is as pitiless as war; and, while Shakespeare and Molière have won immortality, we have forgotten the names of those who suggested some plots and even fashioned a phrase or two. And this brings us to the clear conclusion that plagiary is a question rather of criticism than of morals. All is permitted to him who succeeds. A play or a poem is not controlled by the laws which protect the purse of the wayfarer. The clumsy workman is condemned whether he steal or not, and the master can laugh in the detractor's face. And as for the fanatic, who would suppress his origins, he is inarticulate or ridiculous. We cannot proceed but by the aid of that which has gone before, and he who boasts that he comes out of space, into space he shall return. Dumas the Elder never lacked the quality of invention, yet even he dared not claim originality for his works. "As to the creation of a thing," said he, "I deem that to be impossible. God Himself, when He created man, did not dare to invent; He made him after His own image."

Hark! the drums beat! the trumpets blare! One hundred thousand citizens are in the street to acclaim the masterpiece of the century. After a laborious silence of three (or is it five?) years, the most gifted lady whom the world has seen speaks once more — speaks too with that clarion-voice of satire we know so well. It is no wonder, then, that the hoardings are covered with the praise of 'The Master-Christian,' or that 'The Master-Christian' is warranted to eclipse the works of Sir Walter Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens. For in 'The Master-Christian' (we are told) Miss Corelli is at her best, and all the world knows that Miss Corelli at her best is unapproachable. Especially in the quality of courage Miss Corelli eclipses all her contemporaries. Neither the crimes of this life nor the mysteries of the life to come have

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any terror for her. Most people, who are all untinctured with learning, who write their own tongue with a reckless uncertainty, who have but a vague sense of words and their meanings, would shrink from the task which the most talented novelist of this or any other age has imposed upon herself. Who, indeed, save the author of 'The Master-Christian,' would dare to bring upon a mimic scene Jesus Christ and the Pope of Rome? But, as we have said, Miss Corelli is fit for any enterprise. She at least is not trammelled by reverence or decency. She has no scruples in putting her common, pert, ungrammatical sentences even into the mouth of personages princely or divine; and why, indeed, should she scruple or criticise? If her English halts, it is the best that she has, and the basest critic must acknowledge that every licence is permitted to genius. For, alas! genius is only too rare in this sad world of ours, and when we find a solid wad of it—632 pages in all—we must doff our hats, and be grateful that we did not live fifty years ago, when fiction had nothing better to offer us than the cynicism of Thackeray or the farcical humour of Charles Dickens.

Miss Corelli, then, has genius, and plenty of it—*cela va sans dire*, as she would say herself. If she did not possess the supreme gift, we might perhaps object to her sanguine temerity. We might suggest, for instance, that a formal attack upon all the Churches should not be made by an unlettered lady, who knows not the rudiments of theology or criticism. We might point out in all modesty that to give your characters high-sounding names, and to put such speeches in their mouth as would shame an orator of Hyde Park, is wicked irreverence. We might prefer a slight knowledge of English grammar to miles of obvious rhetoric. We might urge that a fluid style was an insufficient atonement for unblushing inaccuracy. For it must be confessed (by the critic) that Miss Corelli is irreverent, illiterate, rhetorical, and inaccurate. She thinks it not unbecoming to say of Jesus Christ that "the personality of the little fellow was very winning"; she permits the Pope, who is a scholar and a gentleman, to talk like a tub-thumper; finding the poor English tongue insufficient to her purpose, she sprinkles her pages with scraps of French and Italian, hoping, perchance, that her solecisms will deepen the local colour. So when she means "silence," she gasps out *tais-toi;* so she believes that in French *nom de Jésus* is a recognised expletive; so she appears to think that a Parisian countess might say *Quelle honneur!* when she imagined herself "the leading lady" to a great tragedian. Again, if an ordinary man (or woman) of letters choose to denounce a country not his (or her) own, he is expected to strengthen his venom with knowledge. Yet Miss Corelli, whose *sæva indignatio* is piously directed against France, displays a sturdy ignorance of that

country and its literature. To call Catulle Mendès an "hysterical little boy" is a piece of folly that nothing (save genius) can excuse; and what can modern letters mean to a writer who classes Maeterlinck with Byron and Heine as "a wicked person"? But that is the advantage of genius: it need understand nothing; it may parade knowledge which it does not possess; it may commit every sin against taste and truth; and all the same it is genius, or, if it isn't, what becomes of the manifold protestations which have secured, we are told, to 'The Master-Christian' so many thousands of readers?

A humorous champion of Mr Hall Caine once declared in the bravery of print that "not even his detractors could deny him the gift of genius"; and similarly the genius of Miss Corelli does not depend upon the grudging acknowledgment of detractors. Here is her genius thick and slab for all folk to see. Her motive is not fresh,—on the contrary, it is as hackneyed a motive as she, or any other, could find; but no doubt she recognises the truth of Horace's maxim already quoted—*difficile est proprie communia dicere*—and does not stoop to win an effect by mere originality. Now, for many years past it has been a favourite artifice of certain painters to startle the world by putting Jesus Christ into incongruous surroundings. He has been pictured at a music-hall, and at a dinner-table, and the inartistic familiarity has found an instant success. Well, Miss Corelli has achieved in fiction what M. J. Béraud has achieved in painting. She has placed Jesus Christ in the Paris and Rome of to-day; she has confronted Him with the cultured rabble that packs fashionable churches and fashionable studios. But it is not for this that we thank her. Not even in the presence of transcendent genius can we forget who rushes in where angels fear to tread. No; we thank her for a set of romantic characters, which we could not match in the whole realm of fiction.

Above all, she has brought back to life our old friend the Wicked Markiss, who reminds us of those brave days when culture was not, and when the 'Family Herald' rejoiced the hearts of England. And we doubt whether even the 'Family Herald' ever discovered so wicked a Markiss as the gentleman known to Miss Corelli as the Marquis Fontenelle. Poor man, he might have had the *particule;* but surely he is wicked enough without it. "Yes," sighs the beautiful countess, "I am in love with the Marquis Fontenelle! Ah! le beau marquis! He is so extraordinary!—so beautiful!—so wicked!" Is it not our old friend Aubrey Plantagenet himself? Cannot you see his rolling eye and his waxed moustache? And are you not compelled to think of George R. Sims' incomparable poems, and of the monster who in the very eye of the Norman mothers invited the high-born maids to join the revelry of the sensuous galop? But, ah!

what a fine fellow is the Wicked Markiss! There is nothing mean about him. "I seldom ride in a common *fiacre*," he says sadly, "but this time I did so." How could he so far forget himself? How, indeed, save under the impulse of *la chasse?* And despite the common *fiacre*, our Markiss is capable of everything, save marriage. "To love one's wife," says he, "would be *petite bourgeosie*." The French is not quite worthy the noble station of the gentleman, yet how fine the irony! Does it not remind you of Juvenal, the one author in ancient and modern times to whom, we have been told, our great Marie Corelli is comparable? But, alas! the Markiss don't live up to his reputation. He fights a duel with a common actor, who, in a lingo which even the Markiss might envy, describes himself as "Moi! le génie de France," and who, of course, is the Markiss's own long-lost brother, strawberry-mark and all. The brotherhood, if we may say so, is as sure as eggs, and what wonder is it that the great heart, which seldom condescended to a common *fiacre*, broke at the revelation?

But that is the mark of Miss Corelli's genius. She carries us off, breathless and expectant, into what she herself might call the *beau monde*. Above all, she has touched vice with the finger of scorn, and she has brought Sin (with a capital) into the cottage homes of England. She has laid bare with a ruthless courage the crimes of France and of Rome. If we may believe her—and of course we may—every Cardinal is the father of a large and thriving family. And as to the Abbés of France, they are but the wicked Markiss in another costume. M. Vergniaud, in fact, runs a close second to Fontenelle himself. "I know the charm of sin!" he cries—"the singular fascination of pure devilry!" And he does. Well might he rival the flippant Abbés of the last century—in fact, we are half afraid that once again genius is caught napping, and that Miss Corelli believes that St Evrémond still lives. For upon the delicate finger of the Abbé Vergniaud there sparkles a diamond ring; with a listless hand he turns over the worldly pages of the 'Revue de deux Mondes'; and even though he does seem to believe in the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus, he is evidently a wicked, worldly, and witty person. What wonder is it, then, that "France is playing a losing game," and that St Peter's at Rome is but a "huge theatre misnamed a church"?

But better than the Markiss, better than all the infamous clergy, is the beautiful Angela Sovrani, who (we are sure) is nothing but a portrait of Marie Corelli, drawn by only the hand and brain that are capable of understanding her. For Angela Sovrani, also, is a woman of genius, the supreme artist of her age and planet. She is not actually beautiful; but she creates around her, wherever she goes, "an effect of beauty." Her eyes, of course, are "purple-grey and drowsy-

lidded." "In herself she was a creature of remarkable temperament and character—true womanly, in every delicate sentiment, fancy, and feeling, but with something of the man-hero in her scorn of petty aims." Have we not here a masterpiece of self-portraiture? In what other colours can genius be painted? And the resemblance does not end with this. "Within the small head lay a marvellous brain, and the delicate body was possessed by a spirit of potency to conjure with." Moreover, Angela, too, was engaged upon a work which might have been called "The Master-Christian," had she not styled it "The Coming of Christ." It was a vast and painted allegory, which Raffaelle or Angelo would have been proud to sign, if only they could have achieved it; and it convulsed the Vatican as violently as the sermon of the Abbé Vergniaud. Yet for a while it seemed to fail, merely because it had not been painted by a man. And Angela Sovrani had assured the most elaborate secrecy. She refused to show her picture until it was finished. "They take my ideas, and use them," she complained, "and then, when my work is produced, they say it is *I* who have copied them, and that women have no imagination." That is precisely what Marie Corelli has suffered these many years — the thefts and detractions of men. For it is well known that most men and all novelists envy the success of women. On one occasion a great sigh broke from Angela's lips when she thought: "Ah, but the world will never own woman's work to be great, even if it be so, because men give the verdict, and man's praise is for himself and his own achievements always." Even genius, then, is a poor solace to women, for man goes on living in the fool's paradise of self, and it is only when a heroine arises brave as Marie Corelli, that he hears a fragment of the truth. Yet Sappho did not miss the crown of glory, and Jane Austen bore without complaint the misery of her sex.

Thus Marie Corelli thinks and speaks behind the mask of Angela Sovrani. Poor Angela! She, too, put her life-blood into her work, and she, too, was chiefly preoccupied by its sale. "Yes, I must work! That big canvas of mine will not sell, I fear! My father was right. It was a mistake." Of course it was a mistake if it would not sell, as none knows better than Marie Corelli, whose masterpiece will doubtless soon boast half a million readers! "What is the use of painting a picture for the world"—again we quote our Angela—"if there is no chance to let the world see it?" Obviously there is no use at all, because genius is concerned with nothing else than profit and a big circulation. And in the end Angela triumphed, as her creator has triumphed. "If you consent" — so the welcome news was brought her —"the picture will be bought, not by any private purchaser, but by the American nation." Splendid, is it not? And Marie Corelli's triumph is yet greater

than Angela's. Her masterpiece is not bought merely by the American nation; it is a treasure over which America and England will dispute until the end of time.

And what we like best about Marie Corelli is her simple sense of business. Her genius is superior to the vanity which declares that art is its own reward, and that the artist should work to please himself. She finds out precisely what the public wants and gives it to them piping-hot, nor does she ever deceive herself with a foolish theory of perfection. She knows well enough that her work is not sanctified until it is sold, and she knows that every man who wields a pen is consumed with a mad jealousy at the hundreds of thousands of distributed copies. But success does not alway ensure admiration. The poor Angela is stabbed in the back by a vile man jealous of her skill, another incident to prove that Marie Corelli has composed an eloquent chapter of autobiography. Indeed, the author of 'The Silver Domino' has received enough stabs in the back to murder an army, and we should like to believe that Florian's murderous attack upon his rival symbolised Mr Hall Caine's fury when he read the publisher's advertisement of 'The Master-Christian.' But, alas! we may not: for Angela Sovrani loved Florian, and Marie Corelli has publicly stated that she refrains from the study of Hall Caine's works on principle—on the lofty principle that he once read a manuscript of hers without approval.

And the tale of Miss Corelli's genius is not yet told. Her six hundred pages hold many a sensation which we have not space to mention. The murders can hardly be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the eloquent attacks made upon all the Churches are marked by a simple sincerity which easily condones their obvious commonness. Of course 'The Master-Christian' might be condemned as ill-considered, ignorant, and illiterate. It is written (we can hear the objection of the critic) in the sort of pigeon-English affected by trippers who have spent a week on the Continent. It should raise a laugh of contempt, says the envious one, whenever it does not prompt a sigh of disgust. But we know it is a masterpiece: the publishers have told us so, and the hoardings echo the publishers. In brief, it is a work of genius, and we could not forget it if we would.

THE MILITARY POLICY OF THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE AN OFFENSIVE POLICY.

SHALL Great Britain be content to maintain a defensive policy for her army, as she has done for the last half century, or is it necessary for her military policy to be an offensive one, and for her navy and army to act for the *defence of the empire*, on a common plan? The policy of the navy is, in all cases, to "meet the enemy wherever he may be"; the policy of the army, on the other hand, has been, and is, "to act on the defensive within Great Britain," and on this policy our army administration is based and our present plan of mobilisation is framed.

Successive Governments have approved the policy, and the people have endorsed it; so that in all essentials we stand on the same footing as Belgium and Switzerland amongst European nations, whereas the protection of our interests in Greater Britain, and the maintenance of our influence in diplomacy, requires that our army should be kept on a footing of adequate strength, and that its "policy" be essentially offensive, as is that of the navy.

The change involved is a radical one, but it is not, necessarily, an extravagant one. The union of the two services, the navy and the army, in one purpose, must promote strength and result in a well-considered economy, for combination in offensive warfare is exceedingly difficult where the two services are governed by principles that are divergent.

What does the change mean to the nation? A liberal expenditure to enable the military machine to be readjusted, but in the end a feeling of security she has not known for some time.

The European army in India is at all times maintained on an offensive footing, and of recent years the garrisons of our coaling stations and our colonial garrisons have been placed, in regard to numbers and equipment, on a satisfactory footing. It is therefore what has been termed the "home army" that needs to be considered.

We require a very extensive building programme to enable us to accommodate the army of the future, and to provide barracks and buildings of modern requirements in many of our garrisons and depots that have been in existence for a long time. We need to expand our depots to admit of our receiving more recruits, and in war-time, of our accommodating those that remain with battalions and are not fit for service, being under twenty years of age. This will take at least 20 millions of money, which may be procured on loan, to be extended over a period of ten years. In this sum will be included the acquisition of land for exercise and manœuvre and the provision of rifle-ranges.

We shall have to increase the number of officers in each of our battalions and to add largely to the staff of non-commissioned officers both with regiments of cavalry and battalions of infantry, and at all our depots to allow of instructional work being efficiently carried out. This represents an annual increase in expenditure of approximately half a million of money. Fortunately steps have already been taken to increase our field-artillery, and for the present the re-armament and expansion of that arm of the service may be held to have been considered. Similarly, the provision of stores and equipment for a considerable army has been approved, and may be assumed as determined on.

The question, therefore, of how to bring about the change that is required is brought within reasonable limits. First of all, we require to decide what number of regiments and battalions should constitute our fighting army, and maintain them by enlisting the requisite number of recruits. We must determine how our remaining regiments and battalions may be brought to war strength and be placed in the field in reasonable time with horses, transport, &c. These questions are easy of solution provided Parliament determines to provide the requisite funds. A probable additional cost of 5 millions in annual expenditure is estimated as necessary.

They do not involve any change of system, and can be worked out by our responsible military chiefs. *What it is essential that the nation should understand and accept is, that the reform of our auxiliary forces is the principal factor in any step towards placing the army on a sound footing.* Every man in Great Britain should be willing either to serve voluntarily in the Militia or Volunteers, or to pay towards the maintenance of those forces. *Militiamen and volunteers should be given such privileges as will justify this measure of compulsory service.* But in establishing the county militia and the county volunteers on a footing of thorough efficiency, there must be a due proportion maintained between them, and they must be regarded as reinforcements to the territorial battalion with which they are associated. The Militia must be prepared to enter the fighting line after a given period, and to serve where required. The Militia battalions must be made to stand high in the consideration of the county in which they serve. Their expansion is necessary, and the formation of a reserve for the Militia, by which their numbers may be increased threefold, is a *sine quâ non.*

The Volunteer forces occupy a good position in the estimation of the nation at this juncture, and it is well that they have arrived at a stage of efficiency which enables them to become more important than they have hitherto been. Their *rôle* is, however, essentially a defensive one, and their numbers should be limited to what is actually required in the military pro-

gramme of the country: they should not be allowed to enrol as volunteers those who are under twenty years of age, and are consequently unfit for military service and are unequal to meet the soldiers of the Continent, the youngest of whom must be from twenty to twenty-one years of age. If the strength of our Volunteer force be rightly restricted, and opportunity be given, for those members of the force who desire it, to join the fighting line of the army under certain conditions, its whole character will be altered, and the improvement in the force will commend itself to the nation. But it is essential to realise that, if the present conditions of enrolment are continued, the numbers of recruits required for the army and the Militia cannot be obtained in the country.

If the offensive principle be adopted, the resuscitation of our Militia force will follow as a certainty, and the difficulties that surround the problem of army organisation be minimised. It is, however, of real importance that the nature of the question at present before the country be realised.

Unless the change of policy here recommended can be realised, and be approved by Parliament with the consent of the nation, we shall fail to gain acceptance at home for any plan of army reform, and shall certainly find the great colonies of Canada, Australia, and South Africa unwilling to co-operate. The plan must be imperial in its aims, and be governed by principle from its inception.

THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

THE general election of 1900 will mark an epoch in the history of the country. It comes at the end of an eventful century, during the closing years of an exceptionally glorious reign, and it must decide issues of imperial magnitude. The tribunal which pronounces the decisive verdict and gives its mandate to an omnipotent Parliament does so in secrecy and without reasons assigned. The most experienced observers may all be at fault in speculating upon its inscrutable decree. We can only hope that it may be in accordance with wisdom and sound policy.

It is difficult to recognise in one of the two political parties now confronting each other at the polls the lineaments of that great confederacy which since the Reform Act of 1832 has virtually dominated the country. The Liberal party has been of late years gradually reverting to the position which it held at the beginning of the century, for reasons somewhat similar to those which are applicable now. In the long struggle of Pitt against Napoleon its sympathies were suicidally thrown on the side of the national enemies. Although under its great leaders — the Greys, Russells, Palmerstons — of the nineteenth century, the possession of power brought with it the instincts of patriotism and a desire to uphold the interests of the country, yet in the conscious decline of its authority and reputation it has manifested an unmistakable inclination in favour of its earlier delusions. Twice in the past fifteen years public opinion has been successfully appealed to in order to administer a death-blow to its policy. In one instance the Liberals strained every nerve to hand over to those who were admittedly hostile to the British power and the British race the government of Ireland; in the other they were responsible for the growth of a hostile power in the heart of our South African dominions, and rent their party in pieces over the question whether its ascendancy should be resisted by force of arms although the alternative was publicly proclaimed to be our forcible ejection from South Africa. They resent the epithet of doctrinaire, but it is precisely because on high philosophic grounds they prefer the interest of every country to their own, and are ready to ascribe all virtues to the foes of their race, that their patriotic instincts have been sapped. Theology was introduced by the erratic genius of their leader to render the position still more absurd, and it was gravely urged that to resist the authors of rapine, murder, and boycotting was to attribute to the Irish people a double dose of original sin, and that to retrieve our military position in South Africa after the

defeat at Majuba Hill and the treacherous massacre of our soldiers at Bronker's Spruit was to incur bloodguiltiness.

The downfall of one of the great political parties is a public misfortune, more especially as it results not from an occasional mistake of disastrous consequence, but from the adoption of principles which self-preservation scouts. The policy of surrender has become hateful to the country. In domestic affairs it has been far from successful. Even the great measures of parliamentary reform and free trade were carried by means of unconditional surrender, with the result that democracy was established before it was educated, for a time deteriorating the character of the House of Commons; and we are left for all time to combat hostile tariffs with free imports, quite unable even to suggest a policy of reciprocity. Whenever a democratic or even a dangerous measure has been proposed during the last half century, the feeling so graphically expressed by Lord Melbourne when Peel proposed free trade in corn has become universal. It was always to the effect that the moment it is proposed the flowing tide will be with it, and it must be carried. Mr Disraeli was the first to break in upon this fatalism by refusing to stimulate parliamentary reform by opposition. He warded it off for years by rival proposals, and eventually settled it himself. Mr Gladstone finally broke the spell of this fatalistic spirit by propounding Home Rule schemes so perverse in their provisions that they were decisively rejected at two general elections. The establishment of democracy, however precipitately effected, has not been fatal to the ascendancy of common-sense. It has ruined the doctrinaires. It has enthroned *imperium et libertas.* It has rejected Gladstonian policy and methods. It has deposed its self-constituted leaders, or sent them to fall into line with the Conservative party.

The Unionist Government and party which now appeal for the support of the democracy are essentially its own creation. Tories, Whigs, and ultra-Radicals were compelled by it to stand shoulder to shoulder and carry out its imperious decree, which was to consolidate the unity and strength of the empire. The creation was neither sudden nor capricious. The first act, no doubt, of the reformed constitution of 1867 was to establish Mr Gladstone in power and to carry out a large programme of change. Its mandate was obeyed, but its approval was withheld. Liberalism was at the zenith of its success during the first Administration of Mr Gladstone, but as soon as Parliament was dissolved the Liberal party was in its throes. Its foreign policy had exasperated the country. The surrender made by the Alabama treaty, and later on of the Black Sea clauses of the treaty of Paris, and similar acts of feebleness, led to the

Conservative victory of 1874 which astonished the whole political world. It was the first intimation that the British democracy was determined to uphold and extend the empire. No worthier exponent of that policy than Lord Beaconsfield could have been found during the whole course of the century. The reassumption by this country of an influential position in the councils of Europe gave unlimited satisfaction. Even the purchase of the Suez Canal shares occasioned an outburst of popular approval. The determination to resist Russian aggression on Turkey overbore the strong disapproval of Turkish methods and massacres, and European public law was vindicated by the Berlin treaty under British supervision, in a manner which showed that Gladstonian feebleness and sentiment had no real attractions for the British people. But Gladstonian oratory was as powerful as ever, and availed itself largely of the ignorance which pervaded the public mind as to the true state of affairs in Ireland, in Afghanistan, and in South Africa. Subsequent revelations have shown that that ignorance was largely shared by Mr Gladstone himself. The result was the second Gladstone Administration, perhaps the most inglorious and the most disastrous of the Queen's reign. It began by surrendering the Transvaal to the Boers, in the earnest hope that the Boers meant no mischief. It undid much of Lord Beaconsfield's work on the Indian frontier. It surrendered the Soudan to the Mahdi. There was a policy of scuttle all over the world. It vigorously struggled, no doubt, with the Irish malcontents; but by methods so maladroit and unsuccessful that few competent observers were astonished when an unconditional surrender was proclaimed to be the only wise and practicable policy, and when Parnell and all his works were recommended to the approval of the country. The momentous import of this change of front and policy was fully appreciated by the democracy. For a time it had the desired effect of obscuring the long list of foreign failures by the terrible urgency of a domestic issue. It also had the desired effect of rivetting Mr Gladstone's authority on his party. That authority had been challenged by Sir H. James and Sir William Harcourt after the disastrous dissolution of 1874. It was challenged by Mr Chamberlain and Sir C. Dilke during the election of 1885. It was deplored by the Whig leaders and responsible officials. But it became hopeless to dislodge it from the combined forces of Parnellites and Radicals. If that confederacy could be consolidated and triumph, Mr Gladstone would have had all his own way, and the British empire would have suffered as badly as if defeated by Irish and Boers alike. If it failed, Gladstonianism was at an end, Liberalism was extinguished, and the Liberal party was resolved into a congeries of discordant atoms.

The history of the last fifteen years is the history of a determined conflict between the principles of Gladstonianism on the one side and the principle of *imperium et libertas* on the other, which has terminated in the establishment of a great Unionist party led by Lord Salisbury's Government, with a mandate from the constituencies to undo the mischief which had been wrought by the three last Ministries of Mr Gladstone in all parts of the world. Within the space of a single generation the new democracy has exposed Gladstonianism and dethroned it. It has established a strong Unionist party and Government, and has scattered the Liberal party, distracted by internal division, deserted by leader after leader, bereft alike of principle and of policy.

The election of 1895 did not give any mandate in regard of any detailed policy at home. It reaffirmed the decision of 1886, which had been partially and temporarily disturbed by that of 1892. The general effect of the three elections, accentuated by the total failure of the Home Rule Bill of 1893, was emphatically to reverse the policy which had been enforced with so much obstinacy and passion, and to unite all classes in one common determination to maintain the integrity of the empire and uphold its interests throughout the world. Twenty years have now elapsed since that memorable election of 1880, the immediate effect of which was very much as if Great Britain had been conquered by a foreign Power. The accumulated consequences of the disastrous Ministry of five years' duration which followed it have all presented themselves for adjustment and remedy during the five years of Lord Salisbury's third Administration. And the real issue which is now to be submitted for the decision of the constituencies is whether they accord a general approval to the various measures which have been taken, or whether they will revert to the impossible policy of Home Rule in Ireland and surrender abroad, which it is no exaggeration to say menaces us at one and the same time with civil war at home and disastrous complications in other parts of our dominions.

Upon Home Rule it is impossible that any hesitation should arise. Nothing has occurred to raise the smallest doubt in the mind of any reasonable politician as to the wisdom of the House of Lords in rejecting the half-hearted decision of the Commons in its favour, after a discussion which was closured in compartments. The country unhesitatingly supported the Lords, and the completeness and thoroughness of its decision leaves nothing to be desired. That Ireland should govern itself in virtual independence of Great Britain, and still retain a controlling voice in the Imperial Legislature and over the Imperial Government, is as fatuous an arrangement as if the two Boer republics were to be also in complete

and for the defence of our coaling and colonial stations; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has rightly refused to sanction any expenditure, for men, arms, or equipment, in excess of this establishment.

The change of policy already indicated will no doubt require a considerable increase in the establishment to be sanctioned by Parliament, and the all-important question arises, How may we hope by voluntary enlistment to obtain the large number of recruits that will in future be required annually? The Inspector-General of Recruiting, in his report for the year 1899, says:—

"The number of recruits raised for the regular army during 1899 amounted to 42,700, and for the Militia to 40,653. The large number of enlistments which have taken place since the commencement of the war shows that when necessary there are ample recruits forthcoming if there is a chance of seeing active service. What is required, however, is to attract sufficient numbers of men to join the army when there is no such immediate prospect of active service. The only solution of the problem appears to be the assurance of work on leaving the colours."

For some years to come we shall have to supply a regular garrison to South Africa, and to feed and relieve the battalions that are kept there in occupation. To do this, and to arrange for the expansion that is immediately necessary, the number of recruits to be provided annually in the future will be nearly doubled, and may be estimated at not less than 80,000, with a like number of recruits for the Militia. If conscription is to be avoided, and the ballot for the Militia is to be held in abeyance, recruiting for both the naval and military forces of the Queen, and arrangements for providing employment for sailors and soldiers after honourable service, must be dealt with as national questions, and legislation is required to place the business of recruiting on a sound basis, and to provide the employment after service that will alone make it possible to obtain the requisite number of men.

Hitherto recruiting for the army has been conducted by military agency alone: the recruiting sergeant has done his best to attract youths of eighteen or even less to take the Queen's shilling, putting forward the advantages of the army with varying success. The methods adopted are fairly familiar to the public; they have undergone but slight modifications during the last fifty years. They represent a feeble attempt on the part of the military authorities to compete with the labour market, and they are looked upon askance by the people generally; yet the boys obtained by these means have become the soldiers who have fought for Queen and country in every corner of the globe, and have maintained the traditions of the British army for heroic bravery and endurance. Such a system, however, and such methods will no longer serve, and we must aim at placing recruiting on a sound national basis, and at removing whatever relic of prejudice against service in the army still remains in the public mind.

If the question of recruiting is to be placed on a satisfactory footing, it must be realised that every department of the State, and not the War Office alone, has an interest in the matter. Our present Budget system no doubt tends to the separation of interests between the different departments of the State, but the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, and the India Office, as well as the Home Office, have a direct interest in securing and maintaining the efficiency of the naval and military forces of the Crown; and in regard to the return of soldiers to civil life, the Agricultural Department is indirectly interested, while the Treasury is of all departments the one most bound to share in a matter of national concern. The attitude, therefore, of all these different departments with regard to recruiting should not be one of indifference, but they should, so far as is possible, actively second the efforts of the War Office; and in the case of the Home Office, which has a large share of responsibility with regard to the Militia and the Volunteers, the realisation of this responsibility should lead to results which are far-reaching.

From general experience it may be assumed that the number of recruits obtained will vary according to the number of agencies at work, and every civilian official should be instructed to co-operate to the best of his power with the military agencies in the work of attracting recruits, and in setting forward the advantages which the Queen's services hold out to young men. He should help in the necessary advertising, and assist the military recruiter, so that he should not find himself alone in carrying out what is truly a national work. This work needs to be made a popular one, and can only be made so by the loyal co-operation of our military and civil administrations. To this end a permanent committee might with advantage be appointed in every county, under the lord-lieutenant, to deal with all questions affecting the supply of recruits and other military matters; and if the officer commanding the regimental district were made *ex officio* a deputy-lieutenant of the county and a member of the committee, the civil and military administrations would be brought into touch, and every possible chance of friction be avoided.

In cities and large towns similar permanent committees might be established under the mayors, with the recruiting staff officer as a member. Hitherto the recruiting business of the country has been looked down upon, and the agents employed in it have had to struggle against grave difficulties: the whole tone of it requires to be raised, and every member of the community should do his utmost to make it popular.

But the War Office must do its part also, if the assistance thus given by the country is to be effectual. It must make certain that the promises held out to attract recruits are faithfully carried out: that the depot of the battalion, placed in

the centre of the territorial district, is really capable of providing the home which it professes to supply to the young man joining its ranks; that the accommodation is sufficient to ensure his getting all the advantages the army undertakes to provide; that the full number of qualified instructors are available; and that the officer in command has at his disposal the requisite means for carrying out and supervising the training, both physical and moral, which is promised to the recruit, together with educational advantages which should be unequalled. It is the intention of the War Office that all this should be forthcoming, but funds have not yet been available to provide all that is necessary: when they are, we may hope to make the army what it and the navy ought to be — the best training schools which any nation could adopt for its sons; so that those who have passed through its ranks may be better equipped, physically, morally, and mentally, for their work as citizens of a great empire.

But when the Services have done their part the nation must be prepared to welcome back to civil employment the sailors and soldiers who have completed their term of service. For the past fifteen years the National Association for the Employment of Discharged and Reserve Soldiers has been in existence, and its branches are widely diffused throughout the country; but the civilian element, which it was the first aim and object of its promoters to secure, on the committees and working staff, has gradually given place to military agencies, and it is with difficulty that civilian interest is kept alive in its operations.

The nation alone, through its various employments, can assist in placing our recruiting system on a national and popular footing, and the great departments of the State must unite their efforts to consolidate any scheme that may be adopted. There is plenty of raw material of the right sort in the country to produce the best of fighting soldiers, but the question of how to obtain it is the first question that has to be faced; and unless this is dealt with at the outset, it is hopeless to think of establishing an army equal to our imperial necessities, or of maintaining our boasted system of voluntary enlistment.

It is a certainty that unless legislation in Parliament deals with the subjects of recruiting and the employment of soldiers in civil life after service, as a preliminary step in the reorganisation of the army, so much talked of, and unless the assistance of the several departments is loyally given, the business of raising the requisite number of recruits cannot be carried out on national lines, and cannot be successful.

II. THE MILITIA.

What is required to make the Militia force a real support to the regular army is *thorough elementary training.* Officers and men alike require it, and without it the militia must fail to perform its part in the imperial system we have in contemplation. Militia recruits must undergo a thorough training at the depot of the territorial battalion, and they should be put through a complete course of musketry before taking part in the annual training. Officers joining the Militia should be required to go through a course of real instruction similar to that prescribed for officers of the regular army, and should be attached for duty for some months to a line battalion. There seems to be no reason why militia recruits should not be trained during the winter, so as to be ready to join their battalion at its annual training.

It is the intention of the authorities, no doubt, to do away with what is known as the "Militia Reserve," and also to arrange that officers should no longer enter the regular army through the Militia: the Militia, in fact, will cease to feed the regular army in the way it has done hitherto, and will be dealt with as a separate force, which may supply the fighting line with complete and thoroughly efficient units. Why should not the Militia, our constitutional and hereditary force for defence, which took part in an offensive fight at Waterloo, be reinstated in its proper position?

We have to look back almost a century to discover how it is that the Militia has been allowed to degenerate as it has done. The long years of peace which followed the victories of Wellington led to its being disregarded. In 1829 an Act was passed for suspending the ballot, and this annual suspension has continued up to the present date. In 1852 the Militia was reorganised. "From having been a force raised by ballot, with the subsidiary aid of voluntary enlistment, it now became a force of voluntarily enlisted men, with the ballot in reserve, and on this footing it has remained ever since." The result of this change in the character of the Militia has been to remove the administration of this force from the civil authorities to the War Office. It has gradually come to be looked upon as a source from which to feed the regular army; and in Mr Cardwell's scheme of territorial battalions it was unprovided for, in the sense that no provision was made for barrack accommodation which could be occupied during the winter, and the Militia can now only be utilised effectively in the summer. It is condemned to live in tents, and the clothing regulations as they affect it have not been fairly considered for a long time.

The responsibility for the Militia having passed, as al-

treat on either side. To all appearance it wantonly rendered a fearful struggle imminent and inevitable. Great Britain gave the leading contribution to a pacific settlement by avoiding recrimination, and by all classes of its inhabitants showing that they felt in their inmost souls the horror of embarking in a world-wide struggle alike so unnatural and so causeless. Her statesmen secured time for passion to subside. When common-sense and self-control regained their rightful sway over intelligent and responsible races, a sudden passion on both sides for international arbitration rendered the solution of, to all appearance, an insoluble problem, possible and expeditious. The Treaty of Washington created an arbitration tribunal, composed this portentous difference almost as quickly as it had arisen, and gave mutual satisfaction. In the war which afterwards arose between America and Spain, Great Britain, there seems no reason to doubt, actively interfered to secure the non-intervention of Europe or of any European power. In the course which the war took that interference was felt to be of signal service to the United States. They have reciprocated it by an unusual outburst of friendly and even grateful sentiment, to an extent which makes every one feel, or at least hope, that the angry hostility and defiance breathed in the early stage of their Venezuelan interference is a note which has passed away for ever. A civil war between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race would spell ruin and disaster all over the globe. We trust that the present friendly relation may be long continued, that they may be confirmed by the recollection of the manner in which the grave crisis which immediately preceded it had been averted, and that Lord Salisbury and his Government may receive due recognition at the bar of history and at the polls for their wise and successful statesmanship.

Besides the better understanding with the United States which has resulted from the policy of the Ministry, there has at least been one practical advantage obtained—viz., the final settlement of a long-standing dispute with Venezuela. It is of no real consequence that it was settled in a manner which admits the claim of the United States to interfere in any dispute between a European Power and a recognised Government on the American continent, either North or South. That is a claim which the United States will always be in a position to put forward, and so long as it is urged without violence and menace is not one which it is advisable to resist. Great efforts have been made to settle other outstanding causes of difference between the two great Anglo-Saxon powers, and to establish a permanent international court for the settlement of all existing and future disputes. These have not been successful, and even the joint-commission, of which Lord Her-

schell was president, was unable to effect any permanent arrangement. At all events, both with Germany and the United States a *modus vivendi* was arranged of a sufficiently satisfactory character to leave our hands quite free to deal with that which was perhaps the hardest problem of all—the settlement of South Africa, in presence of Boer ambition, resources, and hostility which had grown up with remarkable velocity since the Majuba capitulation and the development of the Rand. Possibly the arrangements in the Samoan archipelago by which Great Britain abandoned important political rights, and under which both America and Germany gained important rights and harbours, may have been the price of neutrality. In the war which is just closing that neutrality and abstention from even diplomatic interference have been of the greatest value. In the case of the United States a desire to reciprocate our good offices during their own struggle may have had something to do with it; and in that of Germany the total insecurity of its own South African possessions in presence of a predominant Boer Government, headed by Mr Kruger or his successors, may have suggested to the German Government and people, in spite of Dr Leyds' propaganda and their own inherent jealousy, that we were in reality fighting their battle as well as our own at a vast expenditure of blood and treasure.

There remained our relations with France, and prudence required, having regard to French naval resources and French persistent rivalry—perhaps we might say active hostility—that we should clearly understand what we had to expect from that quarter before embarking on our South African struggle. The French had one great motive for desiring peace, in their intense desire for the success of their great Exhibition. Notwithstanding her early associations with the Cape, South Africa has not attracted the special attention of France. On the other hand, West Africa was the theatre of portentous activity on her part. French expeditions were numerous in that quarter and along the Niger. They were obviously hostile to us and our treaty rights with the native rulers. It is not too much to say that there was a constant danger of war with France arising out of these expeditions during the early years of Lord Salisbury's Administration. The tension had become intolerable from her encroachments on our West Coast colonies, and her rival territorial claims in Nigeria and other West and Central African territories. The most memorable of these expeditions was that of M. Marchand to the Upper Nile, evidently planned so as to place France in a position to raise a serious controversy over the completeness of our conquest, and to perpetuate Anglo-French rivalry in a quarter of the world where it would be most prejudicial alike to our honour and

security. The French flag was actually hoisted at Fashoda, and a distinct claim, with every sign of premeditation, made to French sovereignty over a portion of the Nile—that is, over a portion of Egypt—in hostility to ourselves. The complication was of the gravest kind: Lord Salisbury refused to negotiate, which, of course, meant war unless the claim was abandoned. In all other respects the international difference was conducted in as conciliatory a manner as possible. On reflection the French gave way. The expedition must have been planned for years, and carried out in the hope that it might have reached its goal at a moment when some weak Administration, or some overwhelming difficulty elsewhere, would have unnerved the British decision. It failed in all respects. France has not yet sufficiently recovered from her military Sedan, and consequent weakness in Europe, to be ready to face with equanimity the possibility, or shall we say the probability, of a naval overthrow, and her consequent weakness all over the world from the loss of ships, colonies, and commerce.

Our vast display of naval power during the Jubilee of 1897, our numerous coaling-stations and naval resources all over the world, the completeness of our naval communications, the vulnerable condition of the French in its remote but valuable possessions, all counselled prudence. M. Marchand, in the face of his Government's decision, appeared in the unenviable plight of having held out his hat on the Upper Nile for a *pourboire* and been civilly requested to move on. The net result of all the irritating activity of the French, which gained for them the reputation of resorting to a policy of pin-pricks, was that conventions were at last entered into which gave to Great Britain absolute control—partly by right of conquest, partly in the name of the Khedive, but wholly freed from French interference—over the whole course of the Nile, and definitely settled all outstanding disputes in Western and Central Africa. This was a valuable achievement. It left France free to promote the success of her Exhibition, and so far as her colonising capacity extends, to develop her African territories. It left this country free to consolidate her reversal of Gladstonian policy in Egypt and the Soudan, and to begin the far more difficult and dangerous task of reversing it in South Africa. The accumulation in that quarter of the world of vast military stores and equipment, the growing confidence and hostility of the Boers, the spirit in which their diplomacy was being conducted during the whole of 1899, and in which their administration had been conducted for years, showed that a struggle was inevitable. It may be claimed for the Government that they had so managed foreign affairs in all parts of the world as

to secure a clear arena for the war. We must all admit that they underrated the proportions and duration of the conflict in store for them. But it must be added that as soon as the magnitude of the task was disclosed, there was not a moment of hesitation. The energy and resources which were forthwith brought to its accomplishment were worthy of the empire, and have been crowned with complete success.

It is superfluous to address a single word to our fellow-electors upon either the policy or justice of the South African war. All who bring a fair mind to bear upon the question, which includes the great mass of our race both at home and in the colonies, know with absolute certainty of conviction that it was an overpowering and calamitous necessity. Argument is superfluous, because it has been demonstrated over and over again that the Boers of the Transvaal were determined to assert their supremacy over the British, had planted the flag of Africa for the Africanders (meaning the Dutch) in their own country, had through the instrumentality of President Steyn converted the Orange Africanders to the same view, and had largely gained the sympathies of numerous Boers in Cape Colony. We were all of us slow to believe it, for we could not contemplate such a scheme as practicable. But the Boers' experience of life had been on a restricted scale, and within its limits Boer ascendancy over the British had been frequently maintained, while the British had mostly contented themselves with claims which they had failed actively to enforce. Moreover, the Boers had been secretly preparing for mischief for years, knew that their resources had become extensive in men, material, and money, while the mystery which enveloped their efforts exaggerated their confidence in the great results which were to follow. The stubbornness which they showed in their diplomacy, and in refusing the just claims of this country to modify their gross tyranny and corruption by granting an effective Uitlander suffrage, was born of this faith in guns which Mr Kruger emphatically proclaimed.

The hostile spirit shown in their administration to everything British and Uitlander was due to the same cause. The correspondence seized at Bloemfontein and Pretoria throws an interesting light upon this spirit, which absolutely destroyed any practicable *modus vivendi* between Boer and British so long as the Government remained in the hands of the former. It also shows that there never was, as we all along asserted in these pages, any political conspiracy on the part of the Cape Government or Cape politicians of influence against British rule. There was Boer sympathy with their blood relations, and this has led to a great deal of disloyalty and active hostility. But there is no sign of any settled intention, or even wish, on the part

of the Cape Colony or the Cape Dutch, to substitute the supremacy of the ignorant and corrupt Transvaal oligarchy for the rule of Great Britain. It is impossible that there should have been. The letters of Sir Henry de Villiers are most interesting, for they show that he, probably in common with all Africanders of light and leading, distrusted President Kruger and his policy from the first. They also confirm the impression, otherwise produced by Kruger's intense obstinacy and self-confidence, that the Transvaal ruler distrusted the Cape Colonists, and fully intended that as a result of his victories over the British the southern colonies as well as the Orange State should feel the weight of his hand.

The *animus* of President Kruger's obstinate reliance on his guns cannot be doubted, when the Chief Justice states in this private letter of his that on a recent visit to Pretoria he regarded it as useless to see the President, since argument made no impression on him. He declares that if he and President Brand could have foreseen Kruger's policy, they would have advised the British Secretary of State in 1881 to recommence the war rather than sign the Convention. A greater condemnation than this of the Majuba capitulation it is impossible to conceive. Making all due allowances for the influence of political complications at home, and for the unforeseen character of events which subsequently occurred, no British Government worthy of the name ought to have concluded that Convention with victorious enemies in possession as invaders of our own territory. The dominant motive was to keep the Ministerial party together, to face future peril by the ostrich's expedient of running your head into the earth. It now appears that that Convention was made with a man of such obstinate hostility to us that leading Africanders themselves admit that he was unfit to be trusted with political power. The fixed idea has since grown in his mind that the Majuba success was to be the foundation of a vast Africander dominion to be erected on the ruins of British power in South Africa. The authors of the Majuba capitulation have therefore much to answer for. They gave to utterly ignorant men, incapable of entertaining the notion that government is a trust and that the real interests of governors and governed are identical, the means of carrying tyranny and corruption to an intolerable pitch. Whether the advice which reached Pretoria was based on the necessity of permanently altering its policy to the Uitlanders, or on the policy of temporary concession, in the hope that some future English Ministry would be easier to deal with, it was in either case addressed to deaf ears. Kruger was confident in his new military strength and in his past military successes. The ardour of his subjects for war with certain victory for its result had become irrepressible, and would

probably have subverted all prudential considerations, if any such existed, in the minds of the rulers. Sir Henry Villiers actually complains that when he was there Reitz seemed to treat the whole matter as a big joke. The suggestion that if war arose the whole might of Great Britain would be brought into play, and would not cease till the Transvaal was entirely subjugated, was utterly disregarded. They plunged headlong into the contest in the firm belief that South Africa would become their own property, but probably with the feeling lurking in the minds of the leaders that if things came to the worst they would be able to escape to Europe with the ill-gotten fruits of their corrupt administration of affairs. If a glimmering of honesty or political good sense remained to them, they could hardly have rejected such a warning as this from so prominent a statesman of their own party as Sir Henry Villiers:—

"I confess I look with horror on a war to be fought by Africanders to bolster up President Kruger's *régime*. I could understand a war in defence of the South African Republic after it has made reasonable concessions to the demands of the new-comers, and after it has displayed the same desire to secure good government as is now in the Orange Free State; but of such a desire I have not seen the faintest trace."

Mr Merriman takes the same view. He complains also of Kruger's obstinacy, his vain hope of building up a State on the foundation of a narrow unenlightened minority, his rejection of all materials lying ready to his hand for establishing a true republic on a broad liberal basis; that his Boers, the backbone of the country, are perishing off the land; that it was imperative to recruit his republic with new blood. And after the war had begun he probably expressed the real sentiment of the Cape Africanders when he says that, notwithstanding their temporary successes, the Boer cause is hopeless, and that "for our people to rise would be sheer madness, and only lead to the loss of our liberties, whereas by sitting still we may exercise some influence over the settlement." With these views confidentially expressed by leading Africanders on the spot and at the time, it is scarcely worth while to argue with the wrong-headed few amongst ourselves who regard the Transvaal oligarchy as oppressed patriots and denounce this war, from which there was no possible escape, as a criminal blunder unjust and unnecessary.

Fortunately for Great Britain at this critical conjuncture, the determination of the country was invincible, and it was led by a Ministry which appreciated the crisis and met it in the end with efforts proportioned to its magnitude. The consequences of underrating at the outset Boer resources was not so serious as might have been anticipated. Great Britain commanded the sea, and had wisely provided herself with secure political relations which could not be subverted on the moment. The caution of the Boer leaders, and the un-

willingness of the Boer forces to face the open warfare of the plains or the risks of carrying fortifications by assault, all stood us in good stead during the enforced delay. As soon as Lord Roberts with his magnificent army appeared upon the scene and effected his first victories, the result was a foregone conclusion, and the Boer forces have retreated from one point to another till they have ceased to merit the name of an army, and, unless they lay down their arms, deserve only the treatment accorded to lawless banditti. All organised resistance has been broken down, and since Kruger's flight there is no longer war with a State possessing any separate political existence or controlled by any responsible Government. It would be a false political generosity which regarded Kruger as the object of sympathy or of the forbearance due to a fallen foe. No meaner political act can be imagined than his ignominious exit from the land which he has done so much to ruin. The most ordinary self-respect should have made him the last to leave the sinking ship. To lead his fellow-burghers to ruin, to prolong the conflict till by the laws of war they are face to face with its utmost rigours, to save his own purse and skin rather than even to attempt to make terms for them, is voluntarily to descend to the lowest depths of personal and political infamy.

The annexations of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal have been formally proclaimed, and those territories have now been finally incorporated with the British empire. We must not be surprised if many Boers still hesitate to regard it as a certainty, and to commit themselves irrevocably to an allegiance which has once before been repudiated with results disastrous to themselves. No assurances were ever more formally given and repeated than those which pledged this country to maintain the annexation effected by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and the manner in which they were belied and repudiated has sunk deep into the hearts of Boer and Briton, of white and black. This is the real consideration which should weigh with all intelligent electors. It is of the utmost importance that no hesitation should be shown at the polls in ratifying annexation, decreeing the settlement of South Africa, and excluding for the present from office the party which has once before pledged itself to annexation and then reversed it. We dare not contemplate the contingency of any other verdict than that of a decisive ratification of the policy which has been carried into effect. Even then the Boers who have once been deceived to their ruin may not all at once appreciate the effect of altered circumstances, or understand that the annexation of to-day is the unanimous unalterable decision of the whole British race both at home and in the colonies, which, after all that has happened, no human force is capable of subverting. If

there is any political wisdom to be found amongst the Boers, those who are still in arms will lay them down. There must be some reckoning for the systematic violation of the rules of war which have been committed by their organised bodies, and for various acts of treachery on the part of the non-combatant population. The time for leniency is past, and must be replaced by wholesome and stern severity, and the work of civil government carried out. Loyalists must receive their reward, and rebels must receive sufficient punishment for their acts, even where no oaths of neutrality have been broken or treachery committed, which will differentiate their position from that of the loyalists. When these large territories are pacified and the Dutch population of South Africa have no longer a hostile flag to rally round whenever they are dissatisfied and disaffected, we may expect that South Africa will become prosperous and contented. The value of this addition to the empire, an addition which has not been sought by us but forced upon us by Mr Kruger's ineptitude, must necessarily be great. The mineral wealth must be enormous, and the revenue of upwards of four millions to which we succeed will be easily yielded when the extortions, direct and indirect, with which it was accompanied, are discontinued, and the taxpayers receive instead the benefits which result from efficient administration. Our past errors of policy in South Africa justify the expectation that we shall contribute our share to the expenses of a war which it became a matter of high imperial concern should be successfully waged. This share we have met by inincreased taxation, which will spread probably over a couple of years. The interest of that portion of the war expenses, which is defrayed by loans, should be charged to the provinces annexed, reduced in amount by the superior credit of an imperial guarantee, and easily to be met from the revenues of the conquered provinces.

It is always difficult to decide as to the right moment of appealing to the country as a Parliament draws towards the close of its natural life. The votaries of annual or triennial Parliaments favour a dissolution at any time, and the extreme reluctance to face their constituencies which is now manifested by many Radicals shows that the septennial period excites no disfavour. But it is very remarkable that of late years the Liberal party has shown no alacrity for a general election. In 1873 they tried to postpone the evil day by resignation, and in the next year they dissolved a Parliament only five years old, in which they had a majority of sixty-six. No adequate reason was assigned for it at the time, and we now know, through the somewhat spiteful revelation of the late Lord Selborne, that it was dictated solely by the personal exigencies of Mr

Gladstone, who found himself in an awkward position, having accepted an additional office and received its emoluments without vacating his seat. The result was disastrous; and on two subsequent occasions — in 1885 and 1895 —the Liberals resigned office rather than dissolve, although in the former case the Parliament again was five years old. In both cases their Administrations had much to answer for. That disastrous Government of 1880-85 had good reasons for avoiding a dissolution, and sought, in handing over to its opponents a short term of office, to evade judgment on the past, and find new issues for the elections. The scheme was adroit, but it relaxed party discipline; and instead of a Prime Minister seeking past approval and future confidence, we had two political programmes, submitted by rival leaders of the same party, each endeavouring to trip up the heels of the other. The old parliamentary hand was equal to the occasion. He declared for Home Rule, expelled dissentients from his party, dissolved the new Parliament as soon as it was formed, and hoped that his power was consolidated for the rest of his life. He was disappointed, and when his next chance came his majority was too small and his age too great for him to profit by it. But again the Liberals resigned rather than dissolve. They vacated their offices. Their successors immediately declared a policy of dissolution, and went to the country, seeking what was virtually a vote of condemnation on their predecessors. After five years' administration, when their mandate has been to clear away the mischief wrought by their rivals in Ireland, in Egypt, in Turkey, in China, and in South Africa, they now seek a convenient moment to dissolve. Whether they are right in their selection can only be judged by the result.

A Prime Minister who dissolves, as well as a general who conducts a campaign, is tried by one standard alone, that of success. In its absence the most adroit excuses or the most conclusive proofs of well-considered management are unavailing. It is largely a personal matter belonging to the Premier with the consent of the Crown. Many consider to this day that if Lord Beaconsfield had resigned in 1878 on his return from Berlin he would have renewed his majority. On the other hand, good faith required that he should wait till his treaty had been executed. And doubtless there was the personal reason that he had never had a majority before, and the one which he had got would last his life. The course which he took resulted in the disaster of 1880, which was mainly owing to the issue of public affairs after the Treaty of Berlin, but which was unfortunately represented as reversing his policy prior to that treaty, and led to the new Government adopting measures under which British prestige has reeled all over the world, until restored by the brilliant suc-

cesses to which we have already referred in detail. The chief, and in our view the decisive, reason for dissolving at the present moment is that the country should sanction the South African policy of the Government in an unmistakable manner, and that neither the Boers nor the Colonies should have any room for doubt. If, for instance, there were twelve months' delay and South Africa faded from the public mind, and some other policy, say Sir W. Harcourt's Protestantism before politics, temporarily absorbed attention, the result would be to inspire want of confidence in the continuity of our policy, in our sustained devotion to the cause of empire, which could not fail to be disastrous. It is, in our judgment, of the first importance that the British constituencies should declare their opinion upon the general foreign policy of the Government, and, above all, of their South African policy. It should be made clear that the establishment of British ascendancy from the Zambesi to the Cape is the fixed resolve of the whole British race, and that, subject to the maintenance of British authority, Boers shall be welcome to equal rights and privileges with all other classes of citizens. A verdict to that effect would have the further result that it would incidentally confirm in an unmistakable manner the decisions of 1886 and 1895, that Great Britain will never tolerate the disintegration of the United Kingdom at the bidding of Ireland. It will be a satisfactory proof of the steadfastness of the public mind that in 1900 Pitt's Act of Union of 1800 needs only incidental confirmation. In the strain of past and impending conflict with Napoleon, Pitt felt it a matter of life and death that the United Kingdom should present a united front. In our recent South African experiences, in the strain of conflict with a distant, brave, and resourceful foe, it has been borne in upon all our minds that a disaffected Ireland with arms in her hands and in possession of a quasi-independence subject to sovereignty would have had her knife at the throat of British power. It is essential that the elections of 1900 should confirm the policy of 1800 and strengthen the foundation of British unity and empire; that the policy of Pitt should emerge triumphant over Gladstonian efforts to subvert it. It seems to us an absolute impossibility in the present forlorn condition of the Liberal party, whose antecedents on the great issue before the electors are characterised by vacillation and disaster, and whose internal divisions have been caused by the two policies of Home Rule and South African surrender, that the electors should hesitate in their votes.

At the moment of going to press the Ministerial addresses have just appeared. As might have been expected, they treat the issue before the country as one of world-wide importance, its decision as one which affects

the national destiny for some time to come. As regards the future the question is, Shall two independent and hostile Governments be restored? Shall their provinces instead be grafted upon the British system, on the footing of self-governing colonies as soon as military force can be dispensed with? Will the continuity of policy necessary to that end be best secured by continued support of the Unionist Government, and will not vacillation of purpose be ruinous to the empire? At such a crisis it is necessary that the Liberal party, which has encouraged and fomented the ambition of the Boers, by unworthy concessions, by misplaced sympathy, and by feebleness and uncertainty of policy, should be bid to stand aside till its disastrous errors have been erased from the public memory, and till time has healed their hurtful effect upon its own efficiency and organisation.

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ARMY REORGANISATION.

ON THE BASIS OF THE ADOPTION, IN OUR NATIONAL MILITARY POLICY, OF THE OFFENSIVE PRINCIPLE AS OPPOSED TO THAT OF PURE DEFENCE.

THE HOME ARMY.

I. RECRUITING.

It was argued in 'Maga' for October that as a prelude to any real scheme of army reform, it is necessary to make a change in the military policy of the country, and to adopt an offensive as opposed to a defensive policy, our plan of mobilisation being shaped accordingly.

By an *offensive* is not intended, by any means, an *aggressive* policy, but one that will ensure the *Pax Britannica* being a governing factor throughout the empire. The limits of defence must be shifted from the shores of Great Britain and made to include all countries and places over which the union-jack floats, in whatever part of the world they may be. Unless we make preparation for such an offensive as will enable us to guard and support every portion of our empire, and organise the army with a view to its working in conjunction with the forces maintained by the colonies, any effort at army reform will fall short of what the nation requires and demands. Hitherto the establishment sanctioned by Parliament has been limited to that deemed necessary for the defence of our own shores, and for the training of the men required for India,

the centre of the territorial district, is really capable of providing the home which it professes to supply to the young man joining its ranks; that the accommodation is sufficient to ensure his getting all the advantages the army undertakes to provide; that the full number of qualified instructors are available; and that the officer in command has at his disposal the requisite means for carrying out and supervising the training, both physical and moral, which is promised to the recruit, together with educational advantages which should be unequalled. It is the intention of the War Office that all this should be forthcoming, but funds have not yet been available to provide all that is necessary: when they are, we may hope to make the army what it and the navy ought to be — the best training schools which any nation could adopt for its sons; so that those who have passed through its ranks may be better equipped, physically, morally, and mentally, for their work as citizens of a great empire.

But when the Services have done their part the nation must be prepared to welcome back to civil employment the sailors and soldiers who have completed their term of service. For the past fifteen years the National Association for the Employment of Discharged and Reserve Soldiers has been in existence, and its branches are widely diffused throughout the country; but the civilian element, which it was the first aim and object of its promoters to secure, on the committees and working staff, has gradually given place to military agencies, and it is with difficulty that civilian interest is kept alive in its operations.

The nation alone, through its various employments, can assist in placing our recruiting system on a national and popular footing, and the great departments of the State must unite their efforts to consolidate any scheme that may be adopted. There is plenty of raw material of the right sort in the country to produce the best of fighting soldiers, but the question of how to obtain it is the first question that has to be faced; and unless this is dealt with at the outset, it is hopeless to think of establishing an army equal to our imperial necessities, or of maintaining our boasted system of voluntary enlistment.

It is a certainty that unless legislation in Parliament deals with the subjects of recruiting and the employment of soldiers in civil life after service, as a preliminary step in the reorganisation of the army, so much talked of, and unless the assistance of the several departments is loyally given, the business of raising the requisite number of recruits cannot be carried out on national lines, and cannot be successful.

II. THE MILITIA.

What is required to make the Militia force a real support to the regular army is *thorough elementary training.* Officers and men alike require it, and without it the militia must fail to perform its part in the imperial system we have in contemplation. Militia recruits must undergo a thorough training at the depot of the territorial battalion, and they should be put through a complete course of musketry before taking part in the annual training. Officers joining the Militia should be required to go through a course of real instruction similar to that prescribed for officers of the regular army, and should be attached for duty for some months to a line battalion. There seems to be no reason why militia recruits should not be trained during the winter, so as to be ready to join their battalion at its annual training.

It is the intention of the authorities, no doubt, to do away with what is known as the "Militia Reserve," and also to arrange that officers should no longer enter the regular army through the Militia: the Militia, in fact, will cease to feed the regular army in the way it has done hitherto, and will be dealt with as a separate force, which may supply the fighting line with complete and thoroughly efficient units. Why should not the Militia, our constitutional and hereditary force for defence, which took part in an offensive fight at Waterloo, be reinstated in its proper position?

We have to look back almost a century to discover how it is that the Militia has been allowed to degenerate as it has done. The long years of peace which followed the victories of Wellington led to its being disregarded. In 1829 an Act was passed for suspending the ballot, and this annual suspension has continued up to the present date. In 1852 the Militia was reorganised. "From having been a force raised by ballot, with the subsidiary aid of voluntary enlistment, it now became a force of voluntarily enlisted men, with the ballot in reserve, and on this footing it has remained ever since." The result of this change in the character of the Militia has been to remove the administration of this force from the civil authorities to the War Office. It has gradually come to be looked upon as a source from which to feed the regular army; and in Mr Cardwell's scheme of territorial battalions it was unprovided for, in the sense that no provision was made for barrack accommodation which could be occupied during the winter, and the Militia can now only be utilised effectively in the summer. It is condemned to live in tents, and the clothing regulations as they affect it have not been fairly considered for a long time.

The responsibility for the Militia having passed, as al-

ready said, from the county authority to the military authority, fresh legislation is necessary to allow the Secretary of State for War to delegate to lord lieutenants of counties some of the powers now vested in him, to allow the Militia to resume its legitimate place in the county, and to ensure the civil administration of the county taking an interest in its welfare.

The formation of county committees, as suggested in the section on recruiting, is the first step towards securing the proper treatment of questions affecting the Militia—the officer commanding the regimental district sitting on such committee as an *ex officio* deputy lieutenant, the necessary property qualification for his doing so being supplied by the depot and public buildings under his care.

It has been suggested by Colonel Innes, who has had many years' experience as the officer commanding the Gordon Highlanders (Militia), that the formation of a "Reserve for the Militia" should be undertaken: every militiaman who has gone through the preliminary training being allowed to pass to the reserve, and being excused attendance from a certain number of annual trainings, provided he goes through a regular course of musketry each year, attending on Saturday afternoons, in plain clothes, at a local range, under regulations to be laid down by the officer commanding the regimental district. Some such arrangement for a reserve for the Militia is no doubt possible, and the force would thus be made capable of expansion when required, provided that arms, clothing, and equipment for the whole number of men in the reserve are sanctioned and kept in store.

The object of this paper is not, however, to discuss details, but to put forward general principles. It is intended to advocate the resuscitation of the Militia service by some delegation of the control of the force now concentrated at the War Office, and by reviving the interest in this body of men which should rightly be taken by the county authorities, and by the people of the county in which the militia battalion is raised.

The general officer commanding the district in which the counties are situated should completely control the whole of the auxiliary forces within the area of his command, and should, with the county authorities, be responsible that the required numbers are maintained. The means of training at his disposal should be complete, and his authority on all matters relating to the welfare of the Militia supreme. Militia barracks suitable for winter occupation must be erected in the neighbourhood of every depot, where the officer commanding the regimental district may supervise the training that may be adopted.

But the first essential in the reorganisation of our auxiliary forces is that the Home Office should act in co-operation with the War Office, and that matters

involving large expenditure, for which provision must be made in the Budget, should be considered from the point of view of their national importance.

The county authorities should undertake the provision of the barracks needed for the Militia, and their cost should be met by the home branch of the Imperial Budget; while clothing, arms, and equipment for the Militia and its reserve, should be regarded as a military matter, and should be liberally dealt with. The militiamen and their families should be cared for by their own counties, and the provision of civil employment for the men should be dealt with as a county matter: they should also be required to wear some distinctive badge, by which they may be recognised during non-training periods. The whole tone of the Militia force requires to be raised, and this needs vigorous action on the part of county authorities.

The real difficulty lies in the question of expenditure, and the action of the Treasury in cutting down the estimates for the Budget has come to be regarded as a legitimate one. Where, however, national interests are concerned, as in the present case, the question of spending money must be faced, and some means must be found of reconciling the interests of different departments of the State.

The battalions of Militia infantry number 128: it ought to be possible to maintain these at a strength of four complete companies, ready to join the territorial regiment, within one month after mobilisation, when eight more companies should immediately be raised from the reserve. Thus the peace establishment of the militia battalion would be 464 of all ranks, kept always efficient, and its reserve would be organised to admit of its expansion to twelve companies, of which eight would be ready to join the fighting line three months after mobilisation.

The question of providing officers for the Militia appears to present great difficulties: it may be met by resorting to the old plan of encouraging the lord lieutenant to exercise his power of nomination; and by opening a small branch at Sandhurst for the instruction of Militia officers, who should further be required to obtain a musketry certificate from Hythe, and should be associated during the early part of their service with the regular battalion of the territorial regiment. It should, further, be a condition of service with the Regulars that officers on retirement, unless for ill-health, should be required to serve for five years in the Militia battalion of their regiment, if called upon to do so. The Staff College should be thrown open to Militia officers, who should become eligible for Militia staff appointments, and under certain conditions for transfer to the line, and for regular staff appointments.

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III. THE VOLUNTEERS.

"The number of volunteers is unlimited."—Manual of Military Law, chap. xi. 63.

"Originally the corps were presumed to be supported by voluntary subscriptions, but for some years grants of money and arms have been made by the Government on conditions requiring the volunteers to make themselves efficient by a certain amount of training."—Manual of Military Law, chap. xi. 64.

Fully recognising the great value of the Volunteer force in the past, and realising the possibilities that lie before it in the future, one hesitates to suggest a change which seems to strike at the root of many of the ideas which have governed it during its whole existence.

The past year has demonstrated how much the force is capable of, and has shown us with what self-sacrificing devotion its members are prepared to serve their country, and to shed their blood in the field when called upon to do so. But if we are to secure the full value of the force as fighting men in our third line of defence, certain radical changes must be faced.

The amount of extra money expended this year on the training of the Volunteers may be estimated at from two to three millions, while the increase in numbers on the establishment which has been permitted is so great, that the cost in future to the country will far exceed the value of their services as a purely Volunteer force. They have, in fact, become a "partially paid" Volunteer force, in the sense that a portion of the Volunteer forces of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, West Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand are partially paid. Yet they have not been required to adopt the regulations necessary to secure greater regularity of attendance at drills and practices, and to the enforcement of a more strict discipline; while to enable them to draw a large capitation allowance by the production of a certain number of efficients, they have enrolled numbers of men who are not up to the physical standard required, and are below the age of men deemed fit for military service.

The changes necessary are briefly these:—

1. The financial regulations require reconsideration; some other form of subsidy should be substituted for the capitation grant, so that commanding officers should not be obliged to accept men of inferior character and physique, in order to obtain a certain number of efficients, and thus secure the grant, without which the corps cannot be financially sound.

2. The numbers of the Volunteers must be limited, and made to bear a proper proportion to those of our regular forces, and to the Militia, otherwise it will be impossible to keep up the establishment of these forces by voluntary enlistment.

3. No volunteers should be enrolled under twenty years of age, as youths of this age are unfit for military service. At the present time about one-third of the entire force is too young to engage any foreign army invading this country.

As the result of circumstances, the Volunteer force has been entirely absorbed by the military administration, and the concentration of control at the War Office has tended to do away with the localisation of the Volunteer force, and to alter the character of the volunteer. Originally enrolled with the idea of affording protection to hearth and home, and of being supported in his endeavours by funds raised locally, he is now entirely dependent on a capitation grant, which it is difficult to obtain, if rules are rigidly enforced, and if recruits are really required to reach an effective standard.

The local civil administration has no longer any share in the formation of corps of town or county Volunteers, and the force has become a heavy burden on the military budget, without being an effective force for military purposes. The remedy for this state of affairs is to face the facts.

Let the force be recognised for what it really is, a "partially paid" Volunteer force; and let it be made an efficient auxiliary force, taking its place in the third line of imperial defence, opportunity being given to its members to join the fighting line under such conditions as may be henceforth approved. In taking this step we shall more nearly assimilate our Volunteer forces to those which are raised in the colonies, and we shall be able to formulate a plan which shall be really adapted to the defence of the empire.

These remedies are comparatively easy, but the real question relating to Volunteers is that of finance. Every one, in a county, who may be unwilling to serve either in the Militia or the Volunteers of that county, should be made to contribute to the funds needed locally for the maintenance of these forces; and a levy should be made, under county authority, to meet this service. This requires to be dealt with by legislation at an early date.

IV. THE REORGANISATION OF OUR REGULAR FORCES.

THE INFANTRY OF OUR HOME ARMY.

The annual budget of military expenditure shows on the first of April last 234,963 effective men of all ranks, inclusive of 52,000 reservists, as representing the home and colonial army; yet in this year, as in previous years, the number of youths under twenty years of age, and consequently *unfit for field service*, included in the above estimate, is, approximately, 35,000. It is the practice of the Treasury, and of the

financial branch of the War Office, to effect a saving in the Budget on the cost of men furnished as drafts to India—approximately 11,000. These are sent out in the autumn, so that in the month of November, before they can be replaced by recruiting, the number of effectives in the army, available for active military purposes, may be calculated at something like 46,000 men below the number given in the annual Budget; for 11,000 men are told off for India, only remaining for a portion of the year in England, and yet are held as belonging to the home establishment.

The home army, as far as infantry is concerned, may be assumed to consist of 80 battalions, on a peace footing of 800 rank and file, of whom 120 may be taken as under twenty years of age, and from 150 to 200 have to be sent to India each autumn, and even this establishment is never complete. It is therefore clear that the army is, and has been for many years past, required to perform its ordinary duties with an establishment very much below what is necessary for efficiency; and the action of the Treasury, and of the financial branch of the War Office, has been held permissible, because the legitimate duty of the home army has been regarded as that of training recruits for the army abroad, and for little else besides.

The assumption of a defensive policy has led to the subordination of the establishment of the home army to the desire for economy, and no single regiment, battalion, or battery at home has ever been efficient for war. If matters are to be placed on a proper footing, the numbers of men under twenty years of age, and those required annually to replace casualties in India, must not be borne on the establishment of the home army. We have allowed battalions to make the training of recruits for foreign service their first duty, instead of considering it their first aim to become efficient for war; and the training of units which are incomplete is necessarily conducted with irregularity and want of success.

Whether the training of the drafts is carried on with a battalion or at a depot is immaterial so long as the establishment of the battalion required for war is kept effective. Of the 80 battalions of infantry quartered at home, 40 *should* be maintained at war strength of 1112 of all ranks, the remaining 40 being on the lower establishment of 881 of all ranks; and if the establishment of all units is maintained, irrespective of youths under twenty, while the men who are to compose the drafts for India and all foreign stations are kept distinct, we shall have an army ready and sufficient to guard the British Isles, and to provide a force for immediate foreign service, without any disturbance of the system under which the army in India and the Colonies is maintained.

The reservists, when called up, not being required immediately to fill gaps in the units to which they belong, will be

able to undergo from one to three months' training before they take their places in the fighting line.

The employment of reservists immediately in the fighting line, apart from the question of training, is largely affected by the permission now being given for them to remain in South Africa, and no doubt in the future they must be allowed to reside in any portion of the empire.

The changes outlined above will involve a modification of the terms of army service, all service up to twenty being counted as boy service, and service after that age being for seven years with the colours and five years with the reserve. This being accepted, and all men of twenty years of age being eligible for foreign service, it will be possible to arrange that the first five years should be spent abroad, if necessary, the men at the end of that time being brought on to the home establishment. A certain number of men may also be permitted to enlist for the home establishment for three years with the colours and nine years in the reserve; so that there will always be in the units serving at home men of from twenty-five to twenty-seven years of age who are serving their last two years with the colours before passing to the reserve, and men of from twenty to twenty-three years of age who are completing three years with the colours.

In order that the territorial system may be maintained, and the linking of battalions on home and foreign service should continue, it will be necessary that four units should be associated together instead of two, as at present, between which interchanges may be made without destroying the regimental organisation or system, which is the backbone of the British army.

To simplify the rates of pay, and to give a fair remuneration for the service performed, a soldier on joining should receive 1s. a-day and a free ration, and his pay should be increased by 1d. a-day for every year of good service, this penny being liable to forfeiture, for one year only, for certain military offences; but any soldier on the home establishment who may receive a sentence of court-martial exceeding forty-two days should be dismissed the service. Soldiers in their ninth year of service, having completed two years boy service, five years service abroad, and two years at home, would be in receipt of 1s. 9d. per diem. Promotions to be made as at present.

It will assist the question of providing soldiers with employment in civil life, that their final period of service with the colours should take place at home, and by their discharges being made at the depot from from which they were originally taken, the provision of such employment will be localised, the county gaining by receiving back men who have gained in education and character during seven years of military service while the men themselves during the years of absence will keep alive home interests, and

employers will learn to look for the return of such valuable men to their neighbourhood year by year.

The change of system advocated in the foregoing pages would take at least five years to work out, but it would give us at the end of that time a home army consisting (as far as infantry alone is concerned) of 40 battalions of seasoned troops at war strength; 40 battalions on a lower establishment, to be supplemented shortly after mobilisation by 52,000 reservists; and 128 half-battalions of Militia, each four companies strong,—a sufficiently formidable first and second line for defensive or offensive action.

The depots will require enlargement so as to make them into four battalion depots, with accommodation for 2000 men.

It is not necessary to pursue the subject further at present: if the principle be agreed to, the details of such an organisation as is here outlined are not far to seek. On another occasion it is proposed to treat of the training of our military forces, and of redistribution with reference to training and mobilisation for war. But there is little use in considering the details of army reorganisation unless there is some assurance that the underlying principles already advocated are generally accepted.

We have been forced into an offensive war of considerable magnitude at a time when our home army was administered on defensive principles. The sudden change from the defensive to the offensive has cost the nation dear in the lives of the many who have fallen, and in money payment which cannot yet be estimated.

During what is termed "the Russian scare," our expenditure in India and at home was excessive, and Mr Gladstone had to ask Parliament for eleven millions to enable the public accounts remaining unsettled after the campaign in Egypt to be adjusted. Why is it that our statesmen and all our public men hesitate to use the word "offensive" in speaking of military policy? They invariably speak of "commerce, the advance of civilisation, and the defence of the country," limiting such defence to Great Britain. The Budget estimate is framed in this spirit, and the check on military expenditure which is exercised by the Treasury is based on this theory, so that our home army cannot be prepared for war. Yet war comes through our very want of preparation, and the cost involved is untold. Place our army on a national footing, and hold it ready for war: in this lies our only real policy of defence, and such a course can alone enable our diplomacy to be directed with decision, leading to a suitable defence of the empire. The progress of commerce and the advancement of civilisation will follow, with all the benefits that spring from a lasting peace.

V. RECAPITULATION.

It is important that we should realise that any real measure of army reform must occupy from five to ten years, and that we cannot pass at once from our present state of imperfect organisation to one of complete perfection; but it is all the more essential that the nation should grasp what are the principles on which this reform should be based, so that it may be able to strengthen the hands of the Government that undertakes to reorganise our home army, and to insist that such reorganisation should be based on a sound policy, and should be pursued continuously irrespective of whatever party is in power.

In the foregoing we have laid down as such fundamental principles the following points:—

1. The adoption of an offensive policy for the army, as being that alone which can secure defence, and as being in the end the most economical policy.

2. The reorganisation of our recruiting system on a national basis, and the establishment of a national system for securing the employment of sailors and soldiers after service.

3. The resuscitation of the Militia, and the resumption by the local civil administration of responsibility with regard to this force.

4. The necessity of limiting the number of volunteers to be enrolled within the area of a county, and of raising a contribution from all men who do not elect to serve either in the county Militia or the county Volunteers to meet local expenses: such contribution to be raised locally.

5. The necessity of maintaining at home at all times as the home establishment a body of seasoned troops efficient for war,—youths who are under twenty years of age being excluded from the establishment of the home army.

6. The need for a change in the present Budget system to secure that measures involving large expenditure shall be considered from the point of view of their national importance,—the action of the Treasury being directed to harmonise the interests of departments, and to ensure the fullest value to the nation for the funds expended.

[In continuation of the foregoing argument in support of an offensive military policy, the following topics will be dealt with in the December number of 'Maga':—

(*a*) The Training of our Military Forces:

(*b*) Redistribution with reference to Training and Mobilisation for War.

—Ed. *B. M.*]

DOOM CASTLE: A ROMANCE.[1]

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER V.—THE FLAGEOLET.

He woke from a dream of pressing danger and impotent flight to marvel where he was in the darkness; fancied himself at first in some wayside inn midway over Scotland, and sat up suddenly with an exclamation of assurance that he was awake to the suppositious landlord who had called, for the sense of some sound but stilled on the second of his waking was strong within him. He fastened upon the vague starlit space of the little window to give him a clue to his situation. Then he remembered Doom, and, with the window for his key, built up the puzzle of his room, half his mind engaged on that, the other half left to wonder at the cause of his alarm.

The wind had risen and sent a loud murmur among the trees along the coast; the sea, in breakers again, beat on the rock till Doom throbbed. But there was nothing in that to waken a man who had ridden two days on coarse roads and encountered and fought with banditti. Decidedly there was some menace in the night; danger on hard fields had given him blood alert and unsleeping; the alarum was drumming at his breast. Stealthily he put out his hand, and it fell as by a fiddler's instinct upon the spot desired—the hilt of his sword. There he kept it with his breath subdued, and the alarum severely quelled.

An owl's call sounded on the shore, extremely pensive in its note, and natural, but unusual in the rhythm of its repetition. It might have passed for the veritable call of the woods to an unsuspicious ear, but Montaiglon knew it for a human signal. As if to prove it so, it was followed by the grating of the outer door upon its hinge, and the sound of a foot stumbling among stones.

He reflected that the tide was out in all probability, and at once the notion followed that here were his searchers, the Macfarlanes, back in force to revenge his impetuous injury to their comrades. But then—a second thought almost as promptly told him — there should be no door opened in that case.

A sound of subdued voices came from the foot of the tower and died in the garden behind or was swept elsewhere by the wind; then, through the voice of the wave, the moan of the wind, and its whistle in vent and cranny, came a strain of music, —not the harsh uncultured pipe of Mungo the servitor, but a more dulcet air of flute or

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flageolet. In those dark savage surroundings it seemed a sound inhuman, something unreal, something of remembrance in delirium or dream, charged for this Parisian with a thousand recollections of fond times, gay times, passionate times elsewhere. Doom throbbed to the waves, but the flageolet stirred in him not so much surprise at this incongruous experience as a wave of emotion where all his past of gaillard was crystalled in a second—many nights of dance and song anew experienced in a mellow note or two; an old love reincarnated in a phrase (and the woman in the dust); the evenings of Provence lived again, and Louis's darling flute piping from the chateau over the field and river; moons of harvest vocal with some peasant cheer; in the south the nightingale searching to express his kinship with the mind of man and the creatures of the copse, his rapture at the star.

Somehow the elusive nature of the music gave it more than half its magic. It would die away as the wind declined, or come in passionate crescendo. For long it seemed to Montaiglon — and yet it was too short—the night was rich with these incongruous but delightful strains. Now the player breathed some soft, slow, melancholy measure of the manner Count Victor had often heard the Scottish exiles croon with tears at his father's house, or sing with too much boisterousness at the dinners of the St Andrew's Club, for which the Leith frigates had made special provision of the Scottish wine. Anon the fingers strayed upon an Italian symphony full of languors and of sun, and once at least a dance gave quickness to the execution.

But more haunting than all was one simple strain and brief, indeed never wholly accomplished, as if the player sought to recollect a song forgot, that was repeated over and over again, as if it were the motive of the others or refrain. Sometimes Montaiglon thought the player had despaired of concluding this bewitching melody when he changed suddenly to another, and he had a very sorrow at his loss; again, when its progress to him was checked by a veering current of the wind, and the flageolet rose once more with a different tune upon it, he dreaded that the conclusion had been found in the lacuna.

He rose at last and went to the window, and tried in the wan illumination of the heavens to detect the mysterious musician in the garden, but that was quite impossible: too dark the night, too huge and profound the shadows over Doom. He went to his door and opened it and looked down the yawning stairway; only the sigh of the wind shrilling in the gun-slits occupied the stairway, and the dark was the dark of Genesis. And so again to bed, to lie with his weariness for long forgotten. He found that tantalising fragment return again and again, but fated never to be complete. It seemed, he fancied, something like a symbol of a life — with all the qualities there, the sweetness,

the affection, the passion, the divine despair, the longing, even the valours and the faiths to make a great accomplishment, but yet lacking the round accomplishment. And as he waited once again for its recurrence he fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.—MUNGO BOYD.

It was difficult for Count Victor, when he went abroad in the morning, to revive in memory the dreary and mysterious impressions of his arrival; and the melody he had heard so often half-completed in the dark waste and hollow of the night was completely gone from his recollection, leaving him only the annoying sense of something on the tongue's-tip, as we say, but as unattainable as if it had never been heard. As he walked upon a little knoll that lay between the seaside of the castle and the wave itself, he found an air of the utmost benignity charged with the odours of wet autumn woodlands in a sunshine. And the sea stretched serene; the mists that had gathered in the night about the hills were rising like the smoke of calm hearths into a sky without a cloud. The castle itself, for all its natural arrogance and menace, had something pleasant in its aspect looked at from this small eminence, where the garden did not display its dishevelment and the bedraggled bower seen from the rear had a look of trim composure.

To add to the morning's cheerfulness Mungo was afoot whistling a ballad air of the low country, with a regard for neither time nor tone in his puckered lips as he sat on a firkin-head at an outhouse door and gutted some fish he had caught with his own hands in a trammel net at the river-mouth before Montaiglon was awake and the bird, as the Gaelic goes, had drunk the water.

"Gude mornin' to your honour," he cried with an elaborately flourished salute as Montaiglon sauntered up to him. "Ye're early on the move, monsher; a fine caller mornin'. I hope ye sleeped weel; it was a gowsty nicht."

In spite of his assumed indifference and the purely casual nature of his comment upon the night, there was a good deal of cunning, thought Montaiglon, in the beady eyes of him, but the stranger only smiled at the ease of those Scots domestic manners.

"I did very well, I thank you," said he. "My riding and all the rest of it yesterday would have made me sleep soundly inside the drum of a marching regiment."

"That's richt, that's richt," said Mungo, ostentatiously handling the fish with the awkward repugnance of one unaccustomed to a task so menial, to prove perhaps that cleansing them was none of his accustomed office. "That's

richt. When we were campaignin' wi' Marlborough oor lads had many a time to sleep wi' the cannon dirlin' aboot them. Ye get us'd to't, ye get us'd to't, as Annapla says aboot bein' a weedow woman. And if ye hae noticed it, Coont, there's nae people mair adapted for fechtin' under diffeeculties than oor ain; that's what maks the Scots the finest sogers in the warld. It's the build o' them, Lowland or Hielan', the breed o' them; the dour hard character o' their country and their mainner o' leevin'. We gied the English a fleg at the 'Forty-five,' didne we? That was where the tartan cam' in: man, there's naethin' like us!"

"You do not speak like a Highlander," said Montaiglon, finding some of this gasconade unintelligible.

"No, I'm no exactly a'thegether a Hielan'man," Mungo admitted, "though I hae freends connected wi' the auldest clans, and though I'm, in a mainner o' speakin', i' the tail o' Doom, as I was i' the tail o' his faither afore him—peace wi' him, he was the grand soger!—but Hielan' or Lowland, we gied them their scuds at the 'Forty-five.' Scots regiments, sir, a' the warld ower, hae had the best o't for fechtin', marching, or glory. See them at the auld grand wars o' Sweden wi' Gustavus, was there ever the like o' them? Or in your ain country, whaur's the bate o' the Gairde Ecossay, as they ca't?"

He spoke with such a zest, he seemed to fire with such a martial glow, that Montaiglon began to fancy that this amusing grotesque, who in stature came no higher than his waist, might have seen some service as sutler or groom in a campaigning regiment.

"*Ma foi!*" he exclaimed, with his surprise restrained from the most delicate considerations for the little man's feelings; "have you been in the wars?"

It was manifestly a home-thrust to Mungo. He had risen, in his moment of braggadocio, and was standing over the fish with a horn-hilted gutting-knife in his hands, that were sanguine with his occupation, and he had, in the excess of his feeling, made a flourish of the knife, as if it were a dagger, when Montaiglon's query checked him. He was a bubble burst, his backbone —that braced him to the tension of a cuirassier of guards—melted into air, into thin air, and a ludicrous limpness came on him, while his eye fell, and confusion showed about his mouth.

"In the wars!" he repeated. "Well—no jist a'thegether what ye micht call i' the wars — though in a mainner o' speakin', gey near't. I had an uncle oot wi' Balmerino; ye may hae heard tell o'm, a man o' tremendous valour, as was generally alooed, Dugald Boyd, by my faither's side. There's been naethin' but sogers in oor faimily since the beginnin' o' time, and mony ane o' them's deid and dusty in foreign lands. If it hadna' been for the want

o' half an inch or thereby in the height o' my heels"—here he stood upon his toes—"I wad hae been in the army mysel'. It's the only employ for a man o' spunk, and there's spunk in Mungo Boyd, mind I'm tellin' ye!"

"It is the most obvious thing in the world, good Mungo," said Montaiglon, smiling. "You eviscerate the fish even with the gusto of a swordsman."

And then an odd thing happened to relieve Mungo's embarrassment and end his garrulity. Floating on the air round the bulge of the turret came a strain of song in a woman's voice, not powerful but rich and sweet, young in its accent, the words inaudible but the air startling to Count Victor, who heard no more than half a bar before he had realised that it was the unfinished melody of the nocturnal flageolet. Before he could comment upon so unexpected and surprising a phenomenon, Mungo incontinently had dropped his gutting-knife, and made with suspicious rapidity for the entrance of the castle, without a word of explanation or leave-taking.

"I become decidedly interested in Annapla," said Montaiglon to himself, witnessing this odd retreat, "and my host gives me no opportunity of paying my homages. Malediction! It cannot be a wife; Bethune said nothing of a wife, and then M. le Baron himself spoke of himself as a widower. A domestic, doubtless; that will more naturally account for the ancient fishmonger's fleet retirement. He goes to chide the erring abigail. Or—or—or the cunning wretch!" continued Montaiglon with new meaning in his eyes, "he is perhaps the essential lover. Let the Baron at breakfast elucidate the mystery."

But the Baron at breakfast said never a word of the domestic economy of his fortalice. As they sat over a frugal meal of oat porridge, the poached fish, and a smoky high-flavoured mutton ham which the Count was happy not to know the history of, his host's conversation was either upon Paris, where he had spent some months of sad expatriation, yawning at its gaiety (it seemed) and longing for the woods of Doom, or upon the plan of the search for the spy and double traitor.

Montaiglon's plans were simple to crudeness. He had, though he did not say so, anticipated some assistance from Doom in identifying the object of his search; but now that this was out of the question, he meant, it appeared, to seek the earliest and most plausible excuse for removal into the immediate vicinity of Argyll's castle, and on some pretext to make the acquaintance of as many of the people there as he could, then to select his man from among them, and push his affair to a conclusion.

"A plausible scheme," said Doom when he heard it, "but contrived without any knowledge of the situation at Argyll's Court. It's not Doom, M. le Count—oh no, it's not Doom down by there; it's a far more kittle place to learn the outs

and ins of. The army and the law are about it, and if your Drimdarroch, as I take it, is a double-dyed traitor to Duke Archie as well as to the king across the water, taking the money of both as has happened before now, he'll be no Drimdarroch and not kent as such down there. Indeed, how could he? for Petullo the writer body is the only Drimdarroch there is to the fore, and he has a grieve in the place. Do you think this by-named Drimdarroch will be going about cocking his bonnet over his French amours and his treasons? Have you any notion that he will be the more or the less likely to do so when he learns that there's a French gentleman of your make in the countryside, and a friend of Doom's, too, which means a Jacobite? A daft errand, if I may say it; seeking a needle in a haystack was bairn's play compared to it."

"If you sit down on the haystack you speedily find the needle, M. le Baron," said Montaiglon playfully. "In other words, trust my sensibility to feel the prick of his presence whenever I get into his society. The fact that he may suspect my object here will make him prick all the quicker and all the harder."

"Even yet you don't comprehend Argyll's Court. It's not Doom, mind you, but a place hotching with folk—half a hundred perhaps of whom have travelled as this Drimdarroch has travelled, and in Paris too, and just of his visage perhaps. Unless you challenged them all seriatim, as Petullo would say, I see no great prospect."

"I wish we could cajole the fly here. That or something like it was what I half expected to be able to do when Bethune gave me your address as that of a landlord in the neighbourhood."

Doom reddened, perhaps with shame at the altered condition of his state in the house of his fathers. "I've seen the day," said he—"I've seen the day they were throng enough buzzing about Doom, but that was only so long as honey was to rob with a fair face and a nice humming at the robbery. Now that I'm a rooked bird and Doom a herried nest, they never look the road I'm on."

Mungo, standing behind his master's chair, gave a little crackling laugh and checked it suddenly at the angry flare in his master's face.

"You're mighty joco!" said the Baron; "perhaps you'll take my friend and me into your confidence;" and he frowned with more than one meaning at the little-abashed retainer.

"Paurdon! paurdon!" said Mungo, every part of the chart-like face thrilled with some uncontrollable sense of drollery, and he exploded in laughter more violent than ever.

"Mungo!" cried his master in the accent of authority.

The domestic drew himself swiftly to attention.

"Mungo!" said his master, "you're a damned fool! In the army ye would have got the triangle for a good deal less. Right about face."

Mungo saluted and made the required retreat with a great deal less than his usual formality.

"There's a bit crack in the creature after all," said Lamond, displaying embarrassment and annoyance, and he quickly changed the conversation, but with a wandering mind, as Count Victor could not fail to notice. The little man, to tell the truth, had somehow laughed at the wrong moment for Count Victor's peace of mind. For why should he be amused at the paucity of the visitors from Argyll's court to the residence of Doom? Across the table at a man unable to conceal his confusion, Montaiglon stole an occasional glance with suspicion growing on him irresistibly.

An inscrutable face was there, as many Highland faces were to him, even among old friends in France, where Balhaldie, with the best possible hand at a game of cards, kept better than any gambler he had ever known before a mask of dull and hopeless resignation. The tongue was soft and fair-spoken; the hand seemed generous enough, but this by all accounts had been so even with Drimdarroch himself, and Drimdarroch was rotten to the core.

"Very curious," thought Montaiglon, making poor play with his braxy ham. "Could Bethune be mistaken in this extraordinary Baron?" And he patched together in his mind Mungo's laughter with the Baron's history as briefly known to him, and the inexplicable signal and alarm of the night.

"Your Mademoiselle Annapla seems to be an entrancing vocalist," said he airily, feeling his way to a revelation.

The Baron, in his abstraction, scarcely half comprehended.

"The maid," he said, "just the maid!" and never a word more, but into a new topic.

"I trust so," thought the Count; "but the fair songster who signals from her window and has clandestine meetings at midnight with masculine voices must expect some incredulity on that point. Can it be possible that here I have Blue Beard or Lothario? The laughter of the woman seems to indicate that if here is not Lothario, here at all events is something more than seems upon the surface. *Tonnerre de Dieu!* I become suspicious of the whole breed of mountaineers. And not a word about last night's alarm—that surely, in common courtesy, demands some explanation to the guest whose sleep is marred."

They went out together upon the mainland in the forenoon to make inquiries as to the encounter with the Macfarlanes. They had left no trace of their presence. They had gone as they had come, without the knowledge of the little community on the south of Doom, and the very place among the bracken where the Count had dropped his bird revealed no feather; the rain had obliterated every other trace. He stood upon the very spot whence he had fired at the luckless robber, and restored,

with the same thrill of apprehension, the sense of mystery and of dread that had hung round him as he stole the day before through voiceless woods to the sound of noisy breakers on a foreign shore. He saw again the brake nod in a little air of wind as if a form had harboured behind it, and the pagan rose in him — not the sceptic but the child of remote and early nature lost in lands of silence and of omen in dim-peopled and fantastic woods on the verge of clamorous seas.

"*Dieu!*" said he with a shiver, turning to his host. "This is decidedly not Verrays in the Rue Conde. I would give a couple of louis d'or for a moment of the bustle of Paris."

"A sad place yon!" said Doom.

And back they went to the castle to play a solemn game of lansquenet.

CHAPTER VII.—THE BAY OF THE BOAR'S HEAD.

A solemn game indeed, for the Baron was a man of a sobriety unaccountable to Montaiglon, who, from what he knew of Macdonnel of Barisdel, Macleod, Balhaldie, and the others of the Gaelic gang in Paris, had looked for a roysterer in Doom. It was a man with strange melancholies he found there, with a ludicrous decorum for a person of his condition, rising regularly on the hour, it seemed, and retiring early to his chamber like a peasant, keeping no company with the neighbouring lairds because he could not even pretend to emulate their state, passing his days among a score of books in English, some (as the Sieur de Guille) in French, and a Bedel Bible in the Irish letter, and as often walking aimlessly about the shore looking ardently at the hills, and rehearsing to himself native rhymes that ever account native women the dearest and the same hills the most beautiful in God's creation. He was the last man to look to for aid in an enterprise like Montaiglon's: if he had an interest in the exploit it seemed it was only to discourage the same, and an hour or two of his company taught the Count he must hunt his spy unaided.

But the hunting of the spy, in the odd irrelevance or inconsistency of nature, was that day at least an enterprise altogether absent from his thoughts. He had been diverted from the object of his journey to Scotland by just such a hint at romance as never failed to fascinate a Montaiglon, and he must be puzzling himself about the dulcet singer and her share in the clandestine midnight meeting. When he had finished his game with his host, and the latter had pleaded business in the burgh as an excuse for his absence in the afternoon, Count Victor went round Doom on every side trying to read its mystery; and while it was a house whose very mortar must be drenched with tradition, whose every window had

looked upon histories innumerable worth re-telling, nothing was revealed of the matter in hand.

Many rooms of it were obviously unoccupied, for in the domestic routine of the Baron and of Mungo and the lady of song there were two storeys utterly unoccupied, and even in the flats habited there were seemingly chambers vacant, at least ever unopened and forlorn. Count Victor realised, as he looked at the frowning and taciturn walls, that he might be in Doom a twelvemonth and have no chance to learn from that abstracted scholar, its owner, one-half of its interior economy.

From the ground he could get no clear view of the woman's window: that he discovered early, for it was in the woman he sought the key to all Doom's little mystery. He must, to command the window, climb to his own chamber in the tower, and even then it was not a full front view he had but a foreshortened glance at the side of it and the signal, if any more signalling there might be. He never entered that room without a glance along the sun-lit walls; he never passed the mouth of that corridor on the half landing where his candle had blown out without as curious a scrutiny as good-breeding might permit. And nothing was revealed.

Mungo pervaded the place—Mungo toiling in the outhouses at tasks the most menial, feeding the half-dozen moulting poultry, digging potatoes in the patch of garden or plucking colewort there, climbing the stairs with backets of peat or wood, shaking a table-cloth to the breeze; and in the *salle* the dark and ruminating master indulging his melancholy by rebuilding the past in the red ash of the fire, or looking with pensive satisfaction from his window upon the coast, a book upon his knee—that was Doom as Count Victor was permitted to know it.

He began at last to doubt his senses, and half believe that what he had heard on the night of his arrival had been no more than a dream of a wearied and imperilled man in unaccustomed surroundings.

Mungo saw him walk with poorly concealed curiosity about the outside of the stronghold, and smiled to himself as one who knows the reason for a gentleman's prying. Montaiglon caught that smile *once*: his chagrin at its irony was blended with a pleasing delusion that the frank and genial domestic might proffer a solution without indelicate questioning. But he was soon undeceived: the discreet retainer knew but three things in this world—the grandeur of war, the ancient splendour of the house of Doom, and the excellent art of absent-mindedness. When it came to the contents of Doom, Mungo Boyd was an oyster.

"It must have been a place of some importance in its day," said Count Victor, gazing up at the towering walls and the broken embrasures.

"And what is't yet?" demanded Mungo, jealously, with

no recollection that a moment ago he had been mourning its decline.

"*Eh bien!* It is quite charming, such of it as I have had the honour to see; still, when the upper stages were habitable——" and Count Victor mentally cursed his luck that he must fence with a blunt-witted scullion.

"Oh ay! I'll allo' I've seen it no' sae empty, if that's what ye mean; but if it's no jist Dumbarton or Dunedin, it's still auld bauld Doom, and an ill deevil to crack, as the laddie said that found the nutmeg."

"But surely," conceded Montaiglon, "and yet, and yet—have you ever heard of Jericho, M. Boyd? Its capitulation was due to so simple a thing as the playing of a trumpet or two."

"I ken naething aboot trumpets," said Mungo curtly, distinguishing some *arrière pensée* in the interogator.

"*Fie donc!* and you so much the old *sabreur!* Perhaps your people marched to the flageolet—a seductive instrument, I assure you."

The little man betrayed confusion. "Annapla thrieps there's a ghaistly flageolet aboot Doom," said he, "but it'll hae to toil away lang or the wa's o' oor Jericho fa', —they're seeven feet thick."

"He plays divinely this ghostly flageoleteer, and knows his Handel to a demi-semi-quaver," said Count Victor coolly.

"O Lord! lugs! I told them that!" muttered Mungo.

"Pardon!"

"Naething; we're a' idiots noo and then, and—and I maun awa' in."

So incontinently he parted from Count Victor, who, to pass the afternoon, went walking on the mainland highway. He walked to the south through the little hamlet he and Doom had visited earlier in the day; and as the beauty of the scenery allured him the farther he went, he found himself at last on a horn of the great bay where the Duke's seat lay sheltered below its hilly ramparts. As he had walked to this place he had noticed that where yesterday had been an empty sea was now a fleet of fishing-boats scurrying in a breeze off land, setting out upon their evening travail—a heartening spectacle; and that on either side of him—once the squalid hamlet of Doom was behind—was a more dainty country with cultivated fields well fenced, and so he was not wholly unprepared for the noble view revealed when he turned the point of land that hid the policies of MacCailein Mor.

But yet the sight somewhat stunned. In all his notions of Drimdarroch's habitat, since he had seen the poverty of Doom, he had taken his cue from Lamond's estate, and had ludicrously underestimated the importance of Argyll's court and the difficulty of finding his man. Instead of a bleak bare country-side, with the ducal seat a mean tower in the midst of it, he saw a wide expanse of thick wooded and habitable country speckled for miles with comfortable dwellings, the castle itself a high embattled struc-

ture, clustered round by a town of some dimensions, and at its foot a harbour, where masts were numerous and smoke rose in clouds.

Here was, plainly, a different society from Doom; here was something of what the exiled chiefs had bragged of in their cups. The Baron had suggested no more than a dozen of cadets about the place. *Grand Dieu!* there must be a regiment in and about this haughty palace with its black and yellow banner streaming in the wind, and to seek Drimdarroch there and round that busy neighbourhood seemed a task quite hopeless.

For twenty minutes he stood on the nose of land, gazing with a thousand speculations at where lay his prey *perdu;* and when he returned to the castle of Doom it looked all the more savage and inhospitable in contrast with the lordly domicile he had seen. What befell him there on his return was so odd and unexpected that it clean swept his mind again of every interest in the spy.

CHAPTER VIII.—AN APPARITION.

The tide in his absence had come in around the rock of Doom, and he must signal for Mungo's ferry. Long and loud he piped, but there was at first no answer; and when at last the little servitor appeared at the turret gable, it was to look who called, and then run back with a haste no way restrained by his customary garrison rigidity. He was not long gone, but when he came down again to the boat his preparations for crossing took up an unconscionable time. First the boat must be baled, it seemed, and then a tholepin was to find; when launched the craft must tangle her bow unaccountably and awkwardly in the weeds. And a curt man was Mungo, though his salute for Count Victor had lost none of its formality. He seemed to be the family's friend resenting, as far as politeness might, some inconvenience to which it was being subjected without having the power to resent the same.

Before they had gained the rock, dusk was on the country, brought the sooner for a frost-fog that had been falling all afternoon. It wrapped the woods upon the shore, made dim the yeasty water-way, and gave Doom itself the look of a phantom tower, some intangible stuff of a fevered dream. It would be ill to find a place less hospitable and cheerful in its outer aspect; not for domestic peace it seemed, but for dark exploits. The gloomy silhouette against the drab sky rose unnaturally, almost inconceivably, tall, a flat plane like a cardboard castle giving little of an impression of actuality, but as a picture dimly seen, flooding an impressionable mind like Count Victor's with a myriad sensations, tragic and unaccustomed. From the shore side no light illumined the sombre

masonry; but to the south there was a glow in what he fancied now must be the woman's window, and higher up, doubtless in the chapel above the flat he occupied himself, there was a radiance on which Mungo at the oars turned round now and then to look.

Whistling a careless melody, and with no particularly acute observation of anything beyond the woman's window, which now monopolised his keenest interest in Doom, he leaped out of the boat as soon as it reached the rock, and entered the castle by the door which Mungo had left open.

What had been a crêpe-like fog outside was utter gloom within. The corridor was pitch-black, the stair, as he climbed to his room, was like a wolf's throat, as the saying goes; but as he felt his way up, a door somewhere above him suddenly opened and shut, lending for a moment a gleam of reflected light to his progress. It was followed immediately by a hurried step coming down the stair.

At first he thought he was at length to see the mysterious Annapla, but the masculine nature of the footfall told him he was in error.

"M. le Baron," he concluded, "and home before me by another route," and he stepped closely into the right side of the wall to give passage. But the darkness made identity impossible, and he waited the recognition of himself. It never came. He was brushed past as by a somnambulist, without greeting or question, though to accomplish it the other in the narrow stairway had to rub clothes with him. Something utterly unexpected in the apparition smote him with surprise and apprehension. It was as if he had encountered a skeleton and he were groping in a mausoleum —something startling to the superstitious instinct, though not terrific in a material way. When it passed he stood speechless on the stair, looking down into the profound black, troubled with amazement, full of speculation. All the suspicions that he had felt last night, when the signal-calls rose below the turret and the door had opened and the flageolet had disturbed his slumbers, came back to him more sinister, more compelling than before. He listened to the declining footfall of that silent mystery; a whisper floated upwards, a door creaked, no more than that, and yet the effect was wildly disturbing, even to a person of the *sangfroid* of Montaiglon.

At a bound he went up to his chamber and lit a candle, and stood a space on the floor lost in thought. When he looked at his face, half unconscious that he did so, in a little mirror on a table he saw revealed there no coward terrors, but assuredly alarm. He smiled at his pallid image, tugged in Gascon manner at his moustache, and threw out his chest; then his sense of humour came to him, and he laughed at the folly of his perturbation. But he did not keep the mood long.

"My *sans culottes* surely do not share the hospitality of Doom with me in its owner's absence," he reflected. "And

yet, and yet — zut! I owe Bethune something for the thrill of the experiences he has introduced me to. Now I comprehend the affection of those weeping exiles for the very plain and commonplace life of France they profess to think so indifferent a country compared to this they have left behind. A week of these ghosts would drive me to despair. To-morrow, to-morrow, M. de Montaiglon, to-morrow you make your reluctant adieux to Doom and its inexplicable owner, whose surprises and innuendoes are too exciting altogether."

So he promised himself as he walked up and down the floor of his chamber, feeling himself in a cage, yet unable to think how he was to better his condition without the aid of the host whose mysteries disturbed so much by the suspicions they aroused. Bethune had told him Lamond was on neighbourly terms with Argyll in spite of his politics and his comparative poverty, and would thus be in a position to put him in touch with the castle of the Duke and the retinue there without creating any suspicion as to the nature of his mission. It was that he had depended on, and to no other quarter could he turn with a hope of being put into communication with the person he sought. But Doom was apparently quite unqualified to be an aid to him. He was no longer in touch with the castle of the Duke; he was, it seemed, at variance with his Grace on account of one of those interminable lawsuits with which the Gaelic chiefs, debarred from fighting in the wholesome old manner with the sword, indulged their contestful passions, and he presented first of all a difficulty that Count Victor in his most hopeless moments had never allowed for — he did not know the identity of the man sought for, and he questioned if it could easily be established. All these considerations determined Count Victor upon an immediate removal from this starven castle and this suspicious host. But when he joined Doom in the *salle* he constrained his features to a calm reserve, showing none of his emotions.

He found the Baron seated by the fire, and ready to take a suspiciously loud but indifferent interest in his ramble.

"Well, Count," said he, "ye've seen the castle of the King o' the Hielan's, as we call him, have you? And what think ye of MacCailein's quarters?"

Montaiglon lounged to a chair, threw a careless glance at his interrogator, pulled the ever upright moustache, and calmly confessed them charming.

A bitter smile came on the face of his host. "They might well be that," said he. "There's many a picking there." And then he became garrulous upon the tale of his house and family, that seemed to have been dogged by misfortune for a century and a half; that had owned once many of these lush glens, the shoulders of these steep bens, the shores of that curving coast. Bit by bit that ancient patrimony had sloughed off in successive generations, lost to lust,

to the gambler's folly, the spendthrift's weakness.

"Hard, is it not?" questioned his host. "I'm the man that should have Doom at its very best, for I could bide among my people here and like them, and make them like me, without a thought of rambling about the world. 'Mildewing with a ditch between you and life,' my grandfather used to call it when old age took him back from his gaieties abroad. Faith! I wish I had the chance to do it better than I may. All's here I ever wanted of life, and I have tasted it elsewhere too. Give me my own acres and my own people about me, and it would be a short day indeed from the rise of the sun till bedtime—a short day and a happy. My father used, after a week or two at home, to walk round the point of Strone where you were to-day and look at the skiffs and gabberts in the port down-by, and the sight never failed to put frolic in the blood of him. If he saw a light out there at sea, the lamp of a ship outbound, he would stand for hours in his night-sark at the window gloating on it. As for me, no ship-light gave me half the satisfaction of the evening star coming up above the hill of Ardno."

"To-morrow," said Montaiglon—"to-morrow is another day; that's my consolation—the Spaniard's—in every trial."

"At something on the happy side of thirty it may be that," admitted Doom; "at forty-five there's not so muckle satisfaction in it."

Through all this Count Victor, in spite of the sympathy that sometimes swept him away into his host's narrative, felt his doubts come back and back at intervals. With an eye intent upon the marvel before him, he asked often what this gentleman was concealing. Was he plotting something? And with whom? What was the secret of that wind-blown castle, its unseen occupants, its midnight music, the ironic laughter of the domestic Mungo, the annoyance of its master at his mirth? Could he possibly be unaware of the strange happenings in his house, of what signalled by day and crept on stairs at night? To look at him yearning there, he was the last man in the world to associate with the thrilling moment of an hour ago when Montaiglon met the marvel on the stairway; but recollections of Drimdarroch's treachery, and the admission of Doom himself that it was not uncommon in his race among the chiefs, made him hopeless of reading that inscrutable face, and he turned to look about the room for some clue to what he found nowhere else.

A chamber plain to meanness—there seemed nothing here to help him to a solution. The few antlered stag-heads upon the walls were mangey and dusty; the strip of arras that swayed softly in the draught of a gun-slit near the larger window only sufficed to accentuate the sordid nature of that once pretentious interior. And the half-curtained recess, with the soiled and dog-eared documents of the law, was the evidence of how all this tragedy

of a downfallen house had come about.

Doom's eyes saw his fall upon the squalid pile.

"Ay!" he said, "that's the ashes of Doom, all that's left of what we burned in fiery living and hot law-pleas. We have the ash and the others have warm hands."

Count Victor, who had been warming his chilled fingers at the fire, moved to the curtain and drew it back, the better again to see that doleful cinerary urn.

His host rose hurriedly from his chair.

"Trash! trash! Only trash, and dear bought at that," said he, seeing his guest's boot-toe push the papers in with a dainty man's fastidiousness.

But the deed was done before the implied protest was attended. The Count's movements revealed a Highland dagger concealed beneath one of the parchments! It was a discovery of no importance in a Highland castle where, in spite of the proscription of weapons, there might innocently be something so common as a dagger left; but a half-checked cry from the Baron stirred up again all Count Victor's worst suspicions.

He looked at Doom, and saw his face was hot with some confusion, and that his tongue stammered upon an excuse his wits were not alert enough to make.

He stooped and picked up the weapon—an elegant instrument well adorned with silver on the hilt and sheath; caught it at the point, and, leaning the hilt upon his left wrist in the manner of the courtier slightly exaggerated, and true to the delicacies of the *salle-d'armes*, proffered it to the owner.

Doom laughed in some confusion. "Ah!" said he, lamely, "Mungo's been at his dusting again," and he tried to restore the easiness of the conversation that the incident had so strangely marred.

But Montaiglon could not so speedily restore his equanimity. For the unknown who had so unceremoniously brushed against him on the dark stair had been attired in dark clothes. It had been a bare knee that had touched him on the leg; it had been a plaid-fringe that had brushed across his face; and his knuckles had been rapped lightly by the protuberances upon the sheath and hilt of a mountain dagger. M. le Baron's proscription of arms seemed to have some strange exceptions, he told himself. They were not only treated with contempt by the Macfarlanes, but even in Doom Castle, whose owner affected to look upon the garb of his ancestors as something well got rid of. For the life of him, Count Victor could not disassociate the thought of that mysterious figure on the stair, full clad in all Highland panoply against the law, and the men — the broken men — who had shot his pony in the wood and attempted to rob him. All the eccentricities of his host rose up before him—his narrow state here with but one servant apparent, a mysterious room tenanted by an invisible woman,

and his coldness—surely far from the Highland temper — to the Count's scheme of revenge upon the fictitious Drimdarroch.

There was an awkward pause even the diplomacy of the Frenchman could not render less uncomfortable, and the Baron fumbled with the weapon ere he laid it down again on the table.

"By the way," said Count Victor, now with his mind made up, "I see no prospect of pushing my discoveries from here, and it is also unfair that I should involve you in my adventure that had much better be conducted from the plain base of an inn, if such there happens to be in the town down there."

A look of unmistakable relief, quelled as soon as it breathed across his face, came to the Baron. "Your will is my pleasure," he said quickly; "but there is at this moment no man in the world who could be more welcome to share my humble domicile."

"Yet I think I could work with more certainty of a quick success from a common lodging in the town than from here. I have heard that now and then French fish dealers and merchants sometimes come for barter to this coast and——"

A ghost of a smile came over Doom's face. "They could scarcely take you for a fish merchant, M. le Count," said he.

"At all events common fairness demands that I should adopt any means that will obviate getting your name into the thing, and I think I shall try the inn. Is there one?"

"There is the best in all the West Country there," said Doom, "kept by a gentleman of family and attainments, though odd in the matter of vanity and form. But it will not do for you to go down there without some introduction. I shall have to speak of your coming to some folk and see if it is a good time."

"*Eh bien!*" said Montaiglon, and the thing was settled.

(To be continued.)

AN AUTUMN DAY'S SPORT NEAR PEKING.

If the climate of Peking is at all times endurable, and at most seasons pleasant, in autumn it is absolutely delightful. The heats — which, after all, do not necessitate punkahs or interfere with tennis—break up about the 15th of August, and by the end of the month the cold weather has begun. Who shall describe the first whispered messages from the steppes—the first crisp breath in the heated air, the smell of approaching autumn? Each day is of the utmost loveliness —a warm sun and blue sky, with an atmosphere of such quality that the hills, fifteen miles off, look within half an hour's ride. The pigeons wheel and flash in the sunlight, making a wild, weird music from the tiny Æolian harps fastened to their tails; the naked, disreputable camels commence to grow their winter coats again; and sporting foreigners bethink them seriously of training for the October races.

In such weather, and such a climate, it is indeed good to be alive. The air alone is meat and strong drink—thrilling the veins and bracing the nerves in a joy which makes one sing for sheer vigorous life! At this season everything harmonises, —the golden crops, reddening leaves, quaint grey temples still nestling in greenery, and the long strings of brown camels. Blue coats innumerable—a deep marine blue—give tone to the chocolate-tinted streets: a Mongol's purple robe and yellow sash effectively light up the dingy camel-humps he bestrides: each detail of the scene is picturesque, in keeping, and ancient as Egypt. And behind all one feels the North wind, sweeping down from the Roof of the World, bringing winter: not a desolating, dirty winter like last night's stout, but crisp and dry, sparkling and joyous — the very champagne of atmospheric vintages!

By the 10th of September the nights, under blazing, naked stars, are frosty. Most people who can then adjourn to metamorphosed Chinese temples, there to live for the training season with their race-ponies. Some half-dozen of these temples are dotted about within a mile or so of the course, which is out in the country some six miles from the city. Let us suppose ourselves comfortably installed in one of them, on or about the 25th of September.

At 6.30 we start on foot, to do the mile and a half to the racecourse — in fur coat and gloves. The air is extremely keen though clear, and the ponies file along behind us, hooded and blanketed to the eyes. The course is of sound turf, surrounded by trees, and with a background of wooded country and blue mountains. A two minutes' gallop on a free-going pony in that air gives the very essence of exhilaration. Four such gallops on different mounts, with

some miles' trotting work in between, brings us to eight o'clock, and our thoughts turn to breakfast.

The world by that hour is well aired: a brilliant sun, as soon as he could bring his rays to bear, has warmed everything, and we are only too glad to hand furs, waistcoats, gloves, and scarfs over to the *mafu* (horse-servant), and troop off to breakfast at a friend's temple in the lightest attire we can, for it is going to be a sweltering day.

What jolly breakfasts those are! Tea and porridge, beer and chops, fish and whisky—whatever you like! Half-a-dozen of us, bursting with health and youth round a well-covered table, the door wide open on to the quaint old tree-shaded courtyard, splashed and fleckered with sunshine, across which the silent shaven priests occasionally steal, throwing a sidelong, curious, half-contemptuous, half-envious glance at the booted, bearded, uproarious barbarians, devouring meat and strong drink within!

Then the delicious after-breakfast smoke in the sunshine, while we examine the ponies and discuss the never-failing subject of their qualities, and performances, past and probable,—whether Day Dream's back tendon will stand strong work, and whether Philosopher, promising, but fat as a bullock, can possibly be forced on sufficiently by the 20th prox. to have any chance in the Criterion Stakes. Framed in the arched-temple gate, the rich well-wooded country stretches away to the blue, clear-ridged hills. The air is filled with the cooing of the temple pigeons; the tinkle of distant camel-bells; the subdued hum and muffled chant of the priests; the thin calls of the first flight of geese on their way south, a grey wedge against the blue sky; or, more rarely, of the long string of wild swans flapping along with such a deceptive appearance of leisure.

Then we get our twelve-bores and some No. 8's for an hour or two's snipe-shooting, the rendezvous being given in another temple for tiffin. Near the racecourse is a large reedy marsh, where birds are always to be found; and here we splash and sweat and bang away till we are hot, tired, and very thirsty. As we stroll home at noon, our pockets bulging with snipe, who would believe in the fur jacket of five short hours before? We are sweltering and purple, in shirt-sleeves and karkee breeches, draggled and splashed, but revelling in being alive on such a glorious day. From the cloudless blue the sun blazes down with summer fierceness, and we are glad when we at length enter the cool, echoing quadrangle of the Temple of the Sleeping Buddha.

Our servant has sent on another change of clothes, and we are soon absorbing draughts of iced Pilsener, and devouring platefuls of macaroni *à l'Italienne* and fowl pilau, to be followed by the postprandial manila, and a visit to the ponies, taking a peace-offering

of carrots. Then perhaps a rubber or two of whist. About four o'clock we get into warm things, take a pocketful of No. 4's and 6's, and, our fur-lined ulsters over our arm, sally forth to well-known points of vantage on the hillocks round the "Lien Hualhih"—"Lotus Pond"—a small lake alongside the race-course—to wait for the flighting duck.

In the silence of that delicious hour we watch the sun go down behind the hills: his dying glories shed over a scene the beauty of which could rarely be surpassed. Beneath us the ponds and patches of reed-framed water become burnished gold; tree-tops, kissed by the last rays, are of fairy lace-work; the western hills glow, flush, and fade in successive purples. The departing monarch's blood-red disc hovers for a long moment on the very crest of the mountains, then sinks, and we are left alone—to watch the strings of wild-fowl, black against the saffron dome, and to muse idly on the journey of *Le Roi Soleil*—past forbidden Lhassa, past the floating gardens of Cashmir, across oceans and continents, to the tiny island 11,000 miles away that we still call "home." Rapidly dusk drops her mantle over us, and from underneath it the cold hand of the North grips us afresh. Roused from our sunset dreams, we button up our ulsters, bring the flaps round our knees, and prepare for action. The moment for the duck is almost come—that exciting quarter of an hour when, though ourselves hidden in the shadow of the hill, we can still see to shoot against the sky. Gripping our gun, we try whether in this crouching position we can pivot easily in any direction, and whether our arms are free. Then we settle down to watch and listen, every nerve on stretch.

Whir-r-r! We start, straining our eyes, as it were, for a sight of the sound. A band of teal are past, but so low against the dark fields that it is impossible to more than guess their course. A few seconds more and then comes the whir-r-r of other rapid wings, another flock flashing by at what seems lightning speed. But they show for a second clear of the field against the lighter sky. We mechanically aim into the brown, and loose both barrels: the reports are followed, we fancy, by a thud. Then come two red upward flashes from a friend along the hill, and, after an interval, the pellets shower on to the quiet lake below. The bewildered teal, turned by the shots, make straight for us again, wheel as they catch a glimpse of our peering heads, but have come within easy range, and we get in a confident right and left, picking our birds. Then a pause at our corner, though one or two dropping shots tell that birds are coming in from other directions. Just as it is getting hopelessly dark, we are cheered by the quack! quack! of an evidently approaching mallard. Guided by the sound, we make him out, a duller shade against the dull sky. Waiting till he is right over

us, we hold just in front and fire; and a loud splash in the pool behind tells where the gallant bird has fallen, completely crumpled up. Whir-r-r again, as we feel our way down to pick him up; but it is *vox et præterea nihil.* Most tantalisingly the teal seem to be now pouring in from all sides; but shooting at the sound of passing wings is hardly good enough! Besides, we have dinner to think of. With the help of our setter—who has till now crouched at our feet, whining softly — we retrieve the right and left teal without difficulty. The first one shot, however, takes more time, as the bird has fallen some way into a ploughed field. Eventually, however, as we are about to give it up, the good dog jumps at something in the dark, and we feel that it is the teal, still alive, in her mouth.

We prove to have been the luckiest this evening, for our friends only produce, one a brace of teal, and the other a "shoveller" duck; though both claim other birds, killed clean but mysteriously disappeared (probably ten miles off, by now, feeding and congratulating themselves on another lucky escape!).

Then we trudge off, along the sandy unlighted road, to the temple where we are to dine. Past the watch-dogs, who bark furiously; past the mat-shed stables, where lights twinkle, and we hear the race-ponies champing their evening feed; through the inner court-yard, into the warm, well-lighted room, of which the paper windows keep out so well the bitter night air, and where a sherry-and-bitters, smoking hot soup, *entrée*, joint, and cheese, with coffee, liqueur, and cigar to top up with, are ready to welcome us.

About nine we rouse ourselves from our too comfortable chair by the stove, muffle up, shoulder our guns, and make for "home"—past the moonlit lake, from which the phantom duck rise whirring at our step; past sleeping farmhouses, and along sandy deserted roads; and finally turn in, with just time for one sigh, half-contentment, half-regret, before we drop into dreamless sleep: regret for another delightful autumn day flown, alas, to join its predecessors!

BRIGHTEN'S SISTER-IN-LAW.

BY HENRY LAWSON.

JIM was born on Gulgong, New South Wales. We used to say "on" Gulgong—and old diggers still talked of being "on th' Gulgong"—though the goldfield there had been worked out for years, and the place was only a dusty little pastoral town in the scrubs. Gulgong was about the last of the great alluvial "rushes" of the "roaring days" — and dreary and dismal enough it looked when I was there. The expression "on" came from being on the "diggings" or goldfield — the workings or the goldfield was all underneath, of course, so we lived (or starved) *on* them—not in nor at 'em.

Mary and I had been married about two years when Jim came—— His name wasn't "Jim," by the way, it was "John Henry," after an uncle godfather; but we called him Jim from the first—(and before it)—because Jim was a popular bush name, and most of my old mates were Jims. The bush is full of good-hearted scamps called Jim.

We lived in an old weather-board shanty that had been a sly-grog-shop, and the Lord knows what else! in the palmy days of Gulgong; and I did a bit of digging ("fossicking," rather), a bit of shearing, a bit of fencing, a bit of bush-carpentering, tank-sinking,—anything, just to keep the billy boiling.

We had a lot of trouble with Jim with his teeth. He was bad with every one of them, and we had most of them lanced — couldn't pull him through without. I remember we got one lanced and the gum healed over before the tooth came through, and we had to get it cut again. He was a plucky little chap, and after the first time he never whimpered when the doctor was lancing his teeth: he used to say "tar" afterwards, and want to bring the lance home with him.

The first turn we got with Jim was the worst. I had had the wife and Jim out camping with me in a tent at a dam I was making at Cattle Creek; I had two men working for me, and a boy to drive one of the tip-drays, and I took Mary out to cook for us. And it was lucky for us that the contract was finished and we got back to Gulgong, and within reach of a doctor, the night we did. We were just camping in the house, with our goods and chattels anyhow, for the night; and we were hardly back home an hour when Jim took convulsions for the first time.

Did you ever see a child in convulsions? You wouldn't want to see it again: it plays the devil with a man's nerves. I'd got the beds fixed up on the floor, and the billies on the fire—I was going to make some

tea, and put a piece of corned beef on to boil over night—when Jim (he'd been queer all day, and his mother was trying to hush him to sleep)—Jim, he screamed out twice. He'd been crying a good deal, and I was dog-tired and worried (over some money a man owed me) or I'd have noticed at once that there was something unusual in the way the child cried out; as it was I didn't turn round till Mary screamed "Joe! Joe!" You know how a woman cries out when her child is in danger or dying—short, and sharp, and terrible. "Joe! Look! look! Oh, my God! our child! Get the bath, quick! quick! it's convulsions!"

Jim was bent back like a bow, stiff as a bullock-yoke, in his mother's arms, and his eyeballs were turned up and fixed—a thing I saw twice afterwards, and don't want ever to see again.

I was falling over things getting the tub and the hot water, when the woman who lived next door rushed in. She called to her husband to run for the doctor, and before the doctor came she and Mary had got Jim into a hot bath and pulled him through.

The neighbour woman made me up a "shake-down" in another room, and stayed with Mary that night; but it was a long while before I got Jim and Mary's screams out of my head and fell asleep.

You may depend I kept the fire in, and a bucket of water hot over it, for a good many nights after that; but (it always happens like this) there came a night (when the fright had worn off) when I was too tired to bother about the fire, and that night Jim took us by surprise. Our wood-heap was done, and I broke up a new chair to get a fire, and had to run a quarter of a mile for water; but this turn wasn't so bad as the first, and we pulled him through.

You never saw a child in convulsions? Well, you don't want to. It must be only a matter of seconds, but it seems long minutes; and half an hour afterwards the child might be laughing and playing with you, or stretched out dead. It shook me up a lot. I was always pretty high-strung and sensitive. After Jim took the first fit, every time he cried, or turned over, or stretched out in the night, I'd jump; I was always feeling his forehead in the dark to see if he was feverish, or feeling his limbs to see if he was "limp" yet. Mary and I often laughed about it—(afterwards). I tried sleeping in another room, but for nights after Jim's first attack I'd be just dozing off into a sound sleep, when I'd hear him scream, as plain as could be, and Mary cry, "Joe!—Joe!—short, sharp, and terrible—and I'd be up and into their room like a shot, only to find them sleeping peacefully. Then I'd feel Jim's head and his breathing for signs of convulsions, see to the fire and water, and go back to bed and try to sleep. For the first few nights I was like that all night, and I'd feel relieved when daylight came. I'd be in first thing

to see if they were all right; then I'd sleep till dinner-time if it was Sunday or I had no work. But then I was run down about that time: I was worried about some money for a wool-shed I put up and never got paid for; and, besides, I'd been pretty wild before I met Mary.

I was fighting hard then—struggling for something better. Both Mary and I were born to better things, and that's what made the life so hard for us.

Jim got on all right for a while; we used to watch him well, and have his teeth lanced in time.

It used to hurt and worry me to see how—just as he was getting fat and rosy and like a natural happy child, and I'd feel proud to take him out—a tooth would come along, and he'd get thin and white and pale and bigger-eyed and old-fashioned. We'd say, "He'll be safe when he gets his eye-teeth": but he didn't get them till he was two; then, "He'll be safe when he gets his two-year-old teeth": they didn't come till he was going on for three.

He was a wonderful little chap: yes, I know all about parents thinking that their child is the best in the world. If your boy is small for his age, friends will say that small children make big men; that he's a very bright, intelligent child, and that it's better to have a bright, intelligent child than a big, sleepy lump of fat. And if your boy is dull and sleepy, they say that the dullest boys make the cleverest men—and all the rest of it. I never took any notice of that sort of clatter—took it for what it was worth; but, all the same, I don't think I ever saw such a child as Jim was when he turned two. He was everybody's favourite. They spoilt him rather. I had my own ideas about bringing up a child. I reckoned Mary was too soft with Jim. She'd say, "Put that" (whatever it was) "out of Jim's reach, will you, Joe?" and I'd say, "No! leave it there, and make him understand he's not to have it. Make him have his meals without any nonsense, and go to bed at a regular hour," I'd say. Mary and I had many a breeze over Jim. She'd say that I forgot he was only a baby: but I held that a baby could be trained from the first week; and I believe I was right.

But, after all, what are you to do? You'll see a boy that was brought up strict turn out a scamp; and another that was dragged up anyhow (by the hair of the head, as the saying was) turn out well. Then, again, when a child is delicate—and you might lose him any day—you don't like to spank him, though he might be turning out a little fiend, as delicate children often do. Suppose you gave a child a hammering, and the same night he took convulsions, or something, and died — how'd you feel about it? You never know what a child is going to take, any more than you can tell what some sort of women are going to say or do.

I was very fond of Jim, and we were great chums. Some-

times I'd sit and wonder what the deuce he was thinking about, and often, the way he talked, he'd make me uneasy. When he was two he wanted a pipe above all things, and I'd get him a clean new clay and he'd sit by my side, on the edge of the verandah, or on a log of the wood-heap, in the cool of the evening, and suck away at his pipe, and try to spit when he saw me do it. He seemed to understand that a cold empty pipe wasn't quite the thing, yet to have the sense to know that he couldn't smoke tobacco yet; he made the best he could of things. And if he broke a clay pipe he wouldn't have a new one, and there'd be a row; the old one had to be mended up, somehow, with string or wire. If I got my hair cut, he'd want his cut too; and it always troubled him to see me shave—as if he thought there must be something wrong somewhere, else he ought to have to be shaved too. I lathered him one day, and pretended to shave him: he sat through it as solemn as an owl, but didn't seem to appreciate it—perhaps he had sense enough to know that it couldn't possibly be the real thing. He felt his face, looked very hard at the lather I scraped off, and whimpered, "No blood, daddy!"

I used to cut myself a good deal: I was always impatient over shaving.

Then he went in to interview his mother about it. She understood his lingo better than I did.

But I wasn't always at ease with him. Sometimes he'd sit looking into the fire, with his head on one side, and I'd watch him and wonder what he was thinking about (I might as well have wondered what a Chinaman was thinking about) till he seemed at least twenty years older than me: sometimes, when I moved or spoke, he'd glance round just as if to see what that old fool of a dadda of his was doing now.

I used to have a fancy that there was something Eastern, or Asiatic — something older than our civilisation or religion —about old-fashioned children. Once I started to explain my idea to a woman I thought would understand—and as it happened she had an old-fashioned child, with very slant eyes—a little tartar he was too. I suppose it was the sight of him that unconsciously reminded me of my infernal theory, and set me off on it, without warning me. Anyhow, it got me mixed up in an awful row with the woman and her husband—and all their tribe. It wasn't an easy thing to explain myself out of it, and the row hasn't been fixed up yet.

I took a good-size fencing contract, the frontage of a ten-mile paddock, near Gulgong, and did well out of it. The railway had got as far as the Cudgeegong river — some twenty miles from Gulgong and two hundred from the coast—and "carrying" was good then. I had a couple of draught-horses, that I worked in the tip-drays when I was tank-sinking, and one or two others running in the bush. I bought a broken-down waggon

cheap, tinkered it up myself—christened it "The Same Old Thing"—and started carrying from the railway terminus through Gulgong and along the bush roads and tracks that branched out fanlike through the scrubs to the one-pub. towns and sheep and cattle stations out there in the howling wilderness. It wasn't much of a team. There were the two heavy horses for "shafters"; a stunted colt, that I'd bought out of the pound for thirty shillings; a light, spring-cart horse; an old grey mare, with points like a big red-and-white Australian store bullock, and with the grit of an old washerwoman to work; and a horse that had spanked along in Cob & Co.'s mail-coach in his time. I had a couple there that didn't belong to me: I worked them for the feeding of them in the dry weather. And I had all sorts of harness, that I mended and fixed up myself. It was a mixed team, but I took light stuff, got through pretty quick, and freight rates were high. So I got along.

Before this, whenever I made a few pounds I'd sink a shaft somewhere, prospecting for gold; but Mary never let me rest till she talked me out of that.

I made up my mind to take on a small "selection" farm—that an old mate of mine had fenced in and cleared, and afterwards "chucked up"—about thirty miles out west of Gulgong, at a place called Lahey's Creek. (The places were all called Lahey's Creek, or Spicer's Flat, or Murphy's Flat, or Ryan's Crossing, or some such name—round there.) I reckoned I'd have a run for the horses and be able to grow a bit of feed. I always had a dread of taking Mary and the children too far away from a doctor — or a good woman neighbour; but there were some people came to live on Lahey's Creek, and besides, there was a young brother of Mary's—a young scamp (his name was Jim, too, by the way, and we called him "Jimmy" to make room for our Jim—he hated the name "Jimmy" or James). He came to live with us — without asking — and I thought he'd find enough work at Lahey's Creek to keep him out of mischief. He wasn't to be depended on much—he thought nothing of riding off, five hundred miles or so, "to have a look at the country"—but he was fond of Mary, and he'd stay by her till I got some one else to keep her company while I was on the road. He would be a protection against "sundowners" or any shearers who happened to wander that way in the "D.T.'s" after a spree. Mary had a married sister come to live at Gulgong just before we left, and nothing would suit her and her husband but we must leave little Jim with them for a month or so—till we got settled down at Lahey's Creek. They were newly married.

Mary was to have driven into Gulgong, in the spring-cart, at the end of the month and taken Jim home; but when the time came she wasn't too well—and,

besides, the tyres of the cart were loose and I hadn't time to get them cut, so we let Jim's time run on a week or so longer, till I happened to come out through Gulgong from the river with a small load of flour for Lahey's Creek way. The roads were good, the weather grand —no chance of it raining, and I had a spare tarpaulin if it did —I would only camp out one night; so I decided to take Jim home with me.

Jim was turning three then, and he was a cure. He was so old-fashioned that he used to frighten me sometimes — I'd almost think that there was something supernatural about him; though, of course, I never took any notice of that rot about some children being too old-fashioned to live. There's always the ghoulish old hag (and some not so old nor haggish either) who'll come round and shake up young parents with such croaks as, "You'll never rear that child—he's too bright for his age." To the devil with them! I say.

But I really thought that Jim was too intelligent for his age, and I often told Mary that he ought to be kept back, and not let talk too much to old diggers and long lanky jokers of bushmen who rode in and hung their horses outside my place on Sunday afternoons.

I don't believe in parents talking about their own children everlastingly—you get sick of hearing them; and their kids are generally little devils, and turn out larrikins as likely as not.

But, for all that, I really think that Jim, when he was three years old, was the most wonderful little chap, in every way, that I ever saw.

For the first hour or so, along the road, he was telling me all about his adventures at his auntie's.

"But they spoilt me too much, dad," he said, as solemn as a native bear. "An' besides, a boy ought to stick to his parrans!" (parents).

I was taking out a cattle-pup for a drover I knew, and the pup took up a good deal of Jim's time.

Sometimes he'd jolt me, the way he talked; and other times I'd have to turn away my head and cough, or shout at the horses, to keep from laughing outright. And once, when I was taken that way, he said—

"What are you jerking your shoulders and coughing, and grunting, and going on that way for, dad? Why don't you tell me something?"

"Tell you what, Jim?"

"Tell me some talk."

So I told him all the talk I could think of. And I had to brighten up, I can tell you, and not draw too much on my imagination—for Jim was a terror at cross-examination when the fit took him; and he didn't think twice about telling you when he thought you were talking nonsense. Once he said—

"I'm glad you took me home with you, dad. You'll get to know Jim."

"What!" I said.

"You'll get to know Jim."

"But don't I know you already?"

"No, you don't. You never has time to know Jim at home."

And, looking back, I saw that it was cruel true. I had known in my heart all along that this was the truth; but it came to me like a blow from Jim. You see, it had been a hard struggle for the last year or so; and when I was home for a day or two I was generally too busy, or too tired and worried, or full of schemes for the future, to take much notice of Jim. Mary used to speak to me about it sometimes. "You never take notice of the child," she'd say. "You could surely find a few minutes of an evening. What's the use of always worrying and brooding? Your brain will go with a snap some day, and, if you get over it, it will teach you a lesson. You'll be an old man, and Jim a young one, before you realise that you had a child once. Then it will be too late."

This sort of talk from Mary always bored me and made me impatient with her, because I knew it all too well. I never worried for myself—only Mary and the children. And I often, as the days went by, said to myself, "I'll take more notice of Jim and give Mary more of my time, just as soon as I can see things clear ahead a bit." And the hard days went on, and the weeks, and the months, and the years—— Ah, well!

Mary used to say, when things would get worse, "Why don't you talk to me, Joe? Why don't you tell me your thoughts, instead of shutting yourself up in yourself and brooding — eating your heart out? It's hard for me: I get to think you're tired of me, and selfish. I might be cross and speak sharp to you when you are in trouble. How am I to know, if you don't tell me?"

But I didn't think she'd understand.

And so, getting acquainted, and chumming and dozing, with the gums closing over our heads here and there, and the ragged patches of sunlight and shade passing up, over the horses, over us, on the front of the load, over the load, and down on to the white, dusty road again—Jim and I got along the lonely bush road and over the ridges, some fifteen miles (we'd started late), before sunset, and camped at Ryan's Crossing on Sandy Creek for the night. I got the horses out and took the harness off. Jim wanted badly to help me, but I made him stay on the load; for one of the horses — a vicious, red-eyed chestnut—was a kicker: he'd broken a man's leg. I got the feed-bags stretched across the shafts, and the chaff-and-corn into them; and there stood the horses all round with their rumps north, south, and west, and their heads between the shafts, munching and switching their tails. We use double shafts, you know, for horse-teams—two pairs side by side, —and prop them up, and stretch bags between them, letting the bags sag to serve as feed-boxes. I threw the spare tarpaulin over the wheels on one

side, letting about half of it lie on the ground in case of damp, and so making a floor and a break-wind. I threw down bags and the blankets and 'possum rug against the wheel to make a camp for Jim and the cattle-pup, and got a gin-case we used for a tucker-box, the frying-pan and billy down, and made a good fire at a log close handy, and soon everything was comfortable. Ryan's Crossing was a grand camp. I stood with my pipe in my mouth, my hands behind my back, and my back to the fire, and took the country in.

Reedy Creek came down along a western spur of the range: the banks here were deep and green, and the water ran clear over the granite bars, boulders, and gravel. Behind us was a dreary flat covered with those gnarled, grey-barked, dry-rotted "native apple-trees" (about as much like apple-trees as the native bear is like any other), and a nasty bit of sand dusty road that I was always glad to get over in wet weather. To the left on our side of the creek were reedy marshes, with frogs croaking, and across the creek the dark box-scrub-covered ridges ended in steep "sidings" coming down to the creek-bank, and to the main road that skirted them, running on west up over a "saddle" in the ridges and on towards Dubbo. The road by Lahey's Creek to a place called Cobborah branched off, through dreary apple-tree and stringy bark flats, to the left, just beyond the crossing: all these fanlike branch tracks from the Cudgeegong were inside a big horse-shoe in the Great Western Line, and so they gave small carriers a chance, now that Cobb & Co.'s coaches and the big teams and vans had shifted out of the main western terminus. There were tall she-oaks all along the creek, and a clump of big ones over a deep water-hole just above the crossing. The creek oaks have rough barked trunks, like English elms, but are much taller, and higher to the branches—and the leaves are reedy; Kendel, the Australian poet, calls them the "she-oak harps Æolian." Those trees are always sigh-sigh-sighing—more of a sigh than a sough, or the "whoosh" of gum-trees in the wind. You always hear them sighing, even when *you* can't feel any wind. It's the same with telegraph wires: put your head against a telegraph-post on a dead, still day, and you'll hear and *feel* the far-away roar of the wires. But then the oaks are not connected with the distance, where there might be wind; and they don't *roar* in a gale, only sigh louder and softer according to the wind, and never seem to go above nor below a certain pitch,—like a big harp with all the strings the same. I used to have a theory that those creek oaks got the wind's voice telephoned to them, so to speak, through the ground.

I happened to look down, and there was Jim (I thought he was on the tarpaulin, playing with the pup): he was standing close beside me with

his legs wide apart, his hands behind his back, and his back to the fire.

He held his head a little on one side, and there was such an old, old, wise expression in his big brown eyes—just as if he'd been a child for a hundred years or so, or as though he were listening to those oaks and understanding them in a fatherly sort of way.

"Dad!" he said presently—"Dad! do you think I'll ever grow up to be a man?"

"Wh—why, Jim?" I gasped.

"Because I don't want to."

I couldn't think of anything against this. It made me uneasy.

"Jim," I said, to break the silence, "do you hear what the she-oaks say?"

"No, I don't. Is they talking?"

"Yes," I said, without thinking.

"What is they saying?"

I scratched my head hard, and took the bucket and went down to the creek for some water for tea. I thought Jim would follow with a little tin billy he had, but he didn't: when I got back to the fire he was again on the 'possum rug, comforting the pup. I fried some bacon and eggs that I'd brought out with me. Jim sang out from the waggon—

"Don't cook too much, dad—I mightn't be hungry."

I got the tin plates and pint-pots and things out on a clean new flour-bag, in honour of Jim, and dished up. He was leaning back on the rug looking at the pup in a listless sort of way. I reckoned he was tired out, and pulled the gin-case up close to him for a table and put his plate on it. But he only tried a mouthful or two, and then he said—

"I ain't hungry, dad! You'll have to eat it all."

It made me uneasy—I never liked to see a child of mine turn from his food. They had given him some tinned salmon in Gulgong, and I was afraid that that was upsetting him. I was always against tinned muck.

"Sick, Jim?" I asked.

"No, dad, I ain't sick; I don't know what's the matter with me."

"Have some tea, sonny?"

"Yes, dad."

I gave him some tea, with some milk in it that I'd brought in a bottle from his aunt's for him. He took a sip or two and then put the pint-pot on the gin-case.

"Jim's tired, dad," he said.

I made him lie down while I fixed up a camp for the night. It had turned a bit chilly, so I let the big tarpaulin down all round—it was made to cover a high load, the flour in the waggon didn't come above the rail, so the tarpaulin came down well on to the ground. I fixed Jim up a comfortable bed under the tail-end of the waggon: when I went to lift him in he was lying back, looking up at the stars in a half-dreamy, half-fascinated way that I didn't like. Whenever Jim was extra old-fashioned, or affectionate, there was danger.

"How do you feel now, sonny?"

It seemed a minute before he heard me and turned from the stars.

"Jim's better, dad." Then he said something like, "The stars are looking at me." I thought he was half asleep. I took off his jacket and boots, and carried him in under the waggon and made him comfortable for the night.

"Kiss me 'night-night, dadda," he said.

I'd rather he hadn't asked me — it was a bad sign. As I was going to the fire he called me back.

"What is it, Jim?"

"Get me my things and the cattle-pup, please, daddy."

I was scared now. His things were some toys and rubbish he'd brought from Gulgong, and I remembered, the last time he had convulsions, he took all his toys and a kitten to bed with him. And "'night-night" and "daddy" were two-year-old language to Jim. I'd thought he'd forgotten those words—he seemed to be going back.

"Are you quite warm enough, Jim?"

"Yes, dad."

I started to walk up and down—I always did this when I was extra worried.

I was frightened now about Jim, though I tried to hide the fact from myself. Presently he called me again.

"What is it, Jim?"

"Take the blankets off me, fahver—Jim's sick!" (They'd been teaching him to say father.)

I was scared now. I remembered a neighbour of ours had a little girl died (she swallowed a pin), and when she was going she said—

"Take the blankets off me, muvver—I'm dyin'."

And I couldn't get that out of my head.

I threw back a fold of the 'possum rug, and felt Jim's head—he seemed cool enough.

"Where do you feel bad, sonny?"

No answer for a while; then he said suddenly, but in a voice as if he were talking in his sleep—

"Put my books [boots] on, please, daddy. I want to go home to muvver!"

I held his hand, and comforted him for a while; then he slept—in a restless, feverish sort of way.

I got the bucket I used for water for the horses and stood it over the fire; I ran to the creek with the big kerosene-tin bucket and got it full of cold water and stood it handy. I got the spade (we always carried one to dig wheels out of bogs in wet weather) and turned a corner of the tarpaulin back, dug a hole, and trod the tarpaulin down into the hole, to serve for a bath, in case of the worst. I had a tin of mustard, and meant to fight a good round for Jim, if death came along.

I stooped in under the tailboard of the waggon and felt Jim. His head was burning hot, and his skin parched and dry as a bone.

Then I lost nerve and started blundering backward and forward between the waggon and the fire, and repeating what

I'd heard Mary say the last time we fought for Jim: "God! don't take my child! God! don't take my boy." I'd never had much faith in doctors, but, my God! I wanted one then. The nearest was fifteen miles away.

I threw back my head and stared up at the branches, in desperation; and—Well I don't ask you to take much stock in this, though most old bushmen will believe anything of the bush by night; and—Now, it might have been that I was all unstrung, or it might have been a patch of sky outlined in the gently moving branches, or the blue smoke rising up. But I saw the figure of a woman, all white, come down, down, nearly to the limbs of the trees, point on up the main road, and then float up and up and vanish, still pointing. I thought Mary was dead. Then it flashed on me——

Four or five miles up the road, over the "saddle," was an old shanty that had been a half-way inn before the Great Western Line got round as far as Dubbo and took the coach traffic off those old bush roads. A man named Brighten lived there. He was a selector; did a little farming, and as much sly-grog selling as he could. He was married—but it wasn't that: I'd thought of them, but she was a childish, worn-out, spiritless woman, and both were pretty "ratty" from hardship and loneliness—they weren't likely to be of any use to me. But it was this: I'd heard talk, among some women in Gulgong, of a sister of Brighten's wife who'd gone out to live with them lately: she'd been a hospital matron in the city they said; and there were yarns about her. Some said she got the sack for exposing the doctors—or carrying on with them—I didn't remember which. The fact of a city woman going out to live in such a place, with such people, was enough to make talk among women in a town twenty miles away, but then there must have been something extra about her, else bushmen wouldn't have talked and carried her name so far; and I wanted a woman out of the ordinary now. I even reasoned this way, thinking like lightning, as I knelt over Jim between the big back wheels of the waggon.

I had an old racing mare that I used as a riding hack, following the team. In a minute I had her saddled and bridled; I tied the end of a half-full chaff-bag, shook the chaff into each end and dumped it on to the pummel as a cushion or buffer for Jim; I wrapped him in a blanket, and scrambled into the saddle with him.

The next minute we were stumbling down the steep bank, clattering and splashing over the crossing, and struggling up the opposite bank to the level. The mare, as I told you, was an old racer, but broken-winded—she must have run without wind after the first half mile. She had the old racing instinct in her strong, and whenever I rode in company I'd have to pull her hard else she'd race

the other horse or burst. She ran low fore and aft, and was the easiest horse I ever rode. She ran like wheels on rails, with a bit of a tremble now and then—like a railway carriage—when she settled down to it.

The chaff-bag had slipped off, in the creek I suppose, and I let the bridle-rein go and held Jim up to me like a baby the whole way. Let the strongest man, who isn't used to it, hold a baby in one position for five minutes—and Jim was fairly heavy. But I never felt the ache in my arms that night—it must have gone before I was in a fit state of mind to feel it. And at home I'd often growled about being asked to hold the baby for a few minutes. I could never brood comfortably and nurse a baby at the same time. It was a ghostly moonlight night. There's no timber in the world so ghostly as the Australian bush in moonlight—or just about daybreak. The all-shaped patches of moonlight falling between ragged, twisted boughs; the ghostly blue-white bark of the "white-box" trees; a dead naked white ring-barked tree, or dead white stump starting out here and there, and the ragged patches of shade and light on the road that made anything, from the shape of a spotted bullock to a naked corpse laid out stark. Roads and tracks through the bush made by moonlight—every one seeming straighter and clearer than the real one: you have to trust to your horse then. Sometimes the naked white trunk of a red stringy bark-tree, where a sheet of bark had been taken off, would start out like a ghost from the dark bush. And dew or frost glistening on these things, according to the season. Now and again great grey kangaroos, that had been feeding on a green patch down by the road, would start with a "thump-thump," and away up the siding.

The bush seemed full of ghosts that night—all going my way—and being left behind by the mare. Once I stopped to look at Jim: I just sat back and the mare "propped"—she'd been a stock-horse too, and used to "cutting-out." I felt Jim's hands and forehead; he was in a burning fever. I bent forward, and the old mare settled down to it again. I kept saying out loud—and Mary and me often laughed about it (afterwards): "He's limp yet!—Jim's limp yet!" (the words seemed jerked out of me by sheer fright)—"He's limp yet!" till the mare's feet took it up. Then, just when I thought she was doing her best and racing her hardest, she suddenly *started forward*, like a cable tram, gliding along its own, and the grip put on suddenly. It was just what she'd do when I'd be riding alone and a strange horse drew up from behind—the old racing instinct. I *felt* the thing too! I felt as if a strange horse *was* there! And then—the words just jerked out of me by sheer funk—I started saying, "Death is riding to-night! . . . Death is racing to-night! . . . Death is riding to-night!" till the

hoofs took that up. And I believe the old mare felt the black horse at her side and was going to beat him or break her heart.

I don't know how she got up the last "pinch." She must have slackened pace, but I never noticed it: I just held Jim up to me and gripped the saddle with my knees — I remember the saddle jerked from the desperate jumps of her till I thought the girth would go. We topped the gap and were going down into a gully they called Dead Man's Hollow, and there, at the back of a ghostly clearing that opened from the road where there were some black-soil springs, was a long, low, oblong weatherboard-and-shingle building, with blind, broken windows in the gable-ends, and a wide steep verandah roof slanting down almost to the level of the window-sills,— there was something sinister about it, I thought — like the hat of a jail-bird slouched over his eyes. The place looked both deserted and haunted. I saw no light, but that was because of the moonlight outside. The mare turned in at the corner of the clearing to take a short cut to the shanty, and, as she struggled across some marshy ground, my heart kept jerking out the words, "It's deserted! They've gone away! It's deserted!" The mare went round to the back and pulled up between the back door and a big bark-and-slab kitchen. Some one shouted from inside—

"Who's there?"

"It's me. Joe Wilson. I want your sister-in-law — I've got the boy — he's sick and dying!"

Brighten came out, pulling up his moleskins. "What boy?" he asked.

"Here, take him," I shouted, "and let me get down."

"What's the matter with him?" asked Brighten, and he seemed to hang back. And just as I made to get my leg over the saddle, Jim's head went back over my arm, he stiffened, and I saw his eyeballs turned up and glistening in the moonlight.

I felt cold all over then and sick in the stomach—but *clear-headed* in a way: strange, wasn't it? I don't know why I didn't get down and rush into the kitchen to get a bath ready. I only felt as if the worst had come, and I wished it were over and gone. I even thought of Mary and the funeral.

Then a woman ran out of the house—a big, hard-looking woman. She had on a wrapper of some sort, and her feet were bare. She laid her hand on Jim, looked at his face, and then snatched him from me and ran into the kitchen—and me down and after her. As great good luck would have it, they had some dirty clothes on to boil in a kerosene tin—dish-cloths or something.

Brighten's sister-in-law dragged a tub out from under the table, wrenched the bucket off the hook, and dumped in the water, dish-cloths and all, snatched a can of cold water from a corner, dashed that in, and felt the water with her hand—holding Jim up to her

hip all the time—and I won't say how he looked. She stood him in the tub and started dashing water over him, tearing off his clothes between the splashes.

"Here, that tin of mustard—there on the shelf!" she shouted to me.

She knocked the lid off the tin on the edge of the tub, and went on splashing and spanking Jim.

It seemed an eternity—and I? Why, I never thought clearer in my life. I felt cold-blooded—I felt as if I'd like an excuse to go outside till it was all over. I even thought of Mary and the funeral—and wished that was over. All this in a flash, as it were. I felt that it would be a great relief, and only wished the funeral was months past. I felt—well, altogether selfish. I only thought of myself.

Brighten's sister-in-law splashed and spanked him hard—hard enough to break his back I thought, and—after about half an hour it seemed—the end came: Jim's limbs relaxed, he slipped down into the tub, and the pupils of his eyes came down. They seemed dull and expressionless, like the eyes of a new baby, but he was back for the world again.

I dropped on the stool by the table.

"It's all right," she said. "It's all over now. I wasn't going to let him die." I was only thinking, "Well, it's over now, but it will come on again. I wish it was over for good. I'm tired of it."

She called to her sister, Mrs Brighten, a washed-out, helpless little fool of a woman, who'd been running in and out and whimpering all the time—

"Here, Jessie! bring the new white blanket off my bed. And you, Brighten, take some of that wood off the fire, and stuff something in that hole there to stop the draught."

Brighten—he was a nuggety little hairy man with no expression to be seen for whiskers—had been running in with sticks and back logs from the wood-heap. He took the wood out, stuffed up the crack, and went inside and brought out a black bottle—got a cup from the shelf, and put both down near my elbow.

Mrs Brighten started to get some supper or breakfast, or whatever it was, ready. She had a clean cloth, and set the table tidily. I noticed that all the tins were polished bright (old coffee- and mustard-tins and the like, that they used instead of sugar-basins and tea-caddies and salt-cellars), and the kitchen was kept as clean as possible. She was all right at little things. I knew a haggard, worked-out bush woman who put her whole soul—or all she'd got left—into polishing old tins till they dazzled your eyes.

I didn't feel inclined for corned beef and damper, and post-and-rail tea. So I sat and squinted, when I thought she wasn't looking, at Brighten's sister-in-law. She was a big woman, her hands and feet were big, but well-shaped and all in proportion—they fitted her. She was a handsome woman—

about forty I should think. She had a square chin, and a straight thin-lipped mouth—straight save for a hint of a turn down at the corners, which I fancied (and I have strange fancies) had been a sign of weakness in the days before she grew hard. There was no sign of weakness now. She had hard grey eyes and blue-black hair. She hadn't spoken yet. She didn't ask me how the boy took ill or I got there, or who or what I was—at least not until the next evening at tea-time.

She sat upright with Jim wrapped in the blanket and laid across her knees, with one hand under his neck and the other laid lightly on him, and she just rocked him gently.

She sat looking hard and straight before her, just as I've seen a tired needlewoman sit with her work in her lap, and look away back into the past. And Jim might have been the work in her lap, for all she seemed to think of him. Now and then she knitted her forehead and blinked.

Suddenly she glanced round and said—in a tone as if I was her husband and she didn't think much of me—

"Why don't you eat something?"

"Beg pardon?"

"Eat something!"

I drank some tea, and sneaked another look at her. I was beginning to feel more natural, and wanted Jim again, now that the colour was coming back into his face, and he didn't look like an unnaturally stiff and staring corpse. I felt a lump rising, and wanted to thank her. I sneaked another look at her.

She was staring straight before her,—I never saw a woman's face change so suddenly—I never saw a woman's eyes so haggard and hopeless. Then her great chest heaved twice, I heard her draw a long shuddering breath, like a knocked-out horse, and two great tears dropped from her wide open eyes down her cheeks like rain-drops on a face of stone. And in the firelight they seemed tinged with blood.

I looked away quick, feeling full up myself. And presently (I hadn't seen her look round) she said—

"Go to bed."

"Beg pardon?" (Her face was the same as before the tears.)

"Go to bed. There's a bed made for you inside on the sofa."

"But—the team—I must ——"

"What?"

"The team. I left it at the camp. I must look to it."

"Oh! Well, Brighten will ride down and bring it up in the morning—or send the half-caste. Now you go to bed, and get a good rest. The boy will be all right. I'll see to that."

I went out—it was a relief to get out—and looked to the mare. Brighten had got her some corn[1] and chaff in a candle-box, but she couldn't eat

[1] Maize or Indian corn—wheat is never called corn in Australia.

yet. She just stood or hung resting one hind-leg and then the other, with her nose over the box—and she sobbed. I put my arms round her neck and my face down on her ragged mane, and cried for the second time since I was a boy.

As I started to go in I heard Brighten's sister-in-law say, suddenly and sharply—

"Take *that* away, Jessie."

And presently I saw Mrs Brighten go into the house with the black bottle.

The moon had gone behind the range. I stood for a minute between the house and the kitchen and peeped in through the kitchen window.

She had moved away from the fire and sat near the table. She bent over Jim and held him up close to her and rocked herself to and fro.

I went to bed and slept till the next afternoon. I woke just in time to hear the tail-end of a conversation between Jim and Brighten's sister-in-law. He was asking her out to our place and she promising to come.

"And now," says Jim, "I want to go home to 'muffer' in 'The Same Ol' Fling.'"

"What?"

Jim repeated.

"Oh! 'The Same Old Thing,'—the waggon."

The rest of the afternoon I poked round the gullies with old Brighten, looking at some "indications" (of the existence of gold) he had found. It was no use trying to "pump" him concerning his sister-in-law; Brighten was an "old hand," and had learned, in the old bush-ranging and cattle-stealing days, to know nothing about other people's business. And, by the way, I noticed then that the more you talk and listen to a bad character, the more you lose your dislike for him.

I never saw such a change in a woman as in Brighten's sister-in-law that evening. She was bright and jolly, and seemed at least ten years younger. She bustled round and helped her sister to get tea ready. She rooted out some old china that Mrs Brighten had stowed away somewhere, and set the table as I seldom saw it set out there. She propped Jim up with pillows, and laughed and played with him like a great girl. She described Sydney and Sydney life as I'd never heard it described before; and she knew as much about the bush and old diggings day as I did. She kept old Brighten and me listening and laughing till nearly midnight. And she seemed quick to understand everything when I talked. If she wanted to explain anything that we hadn't seen, she wouldn't say that it was "like a—like a"—and hesitate (you know what I mean); she'd hit the right thing on the head at once. A squatter with a very round, flaming red face and a white cork hat had gone by in the afternoon: she said it was "like a mushroom on the rising moon." She gave me a lot of good hints about children.

But she was quiet again next morning. I harnessed up, and she dressed Jim and gave him his breakfast, and made a comfortable place for him on the

load with the 'possum rug and a spare pillow. She got up on the wheel to do it herself. Then was the awkward time. I'd half start to speak to her, and then turn away and go fixing up round the horses, and then make another false start to say good-bye. At last she took Jim up in her arms and kissed him, and lifted him on the wheel; but he put his arms tight round her neck, and kissed her—a thing Jim seldom did with anybody, except his mother, for he wasn't what you'd call an affectionate child, — he'd never more than offer his cheek to me, in his old-fashioned way. I'd got up the other side of the load to take him from her.

"Here, take him," she said.

I saw his mouth twitching as I lifted him. Jim seldom cried nowadays — no matter how much he was hurt. I gained some time fixing Jim comfortable.

"You'd better make a start," she said. "You want to get home early with that boy."

I got down and went round to where she stood. I held out my hand and tried to speak, but my voice went like an ungreased waggon wheel, and I gave it up, and only squeezed her hand.

"That's all right," she said; then tears came into her eyes, and she suddenly put her hand on my shoulder and kissed me on the cheek. "You be off—you're only a boy yourself. Take care of that boy; be kind to your wife and take care of yourself."

"Will you come to see us?"

"Some day," she said.

I started the horses, and looked round once more. She was looking up at Jim, who was waving his hand to her from the top of the load. And I saw that haggard, hungry, hopeless look come into her eyes in spite of the tears.

OUR SOLDIERS.

No one has said a word against *them*, at any rate, so that no defence such as was lately offered for their superiors in these pages[1] is necessary. *En passant*, herewith many thanks from a client to that anonymous pleader, in the name of all officers, who, conscious of not being abnormally "stupid," or out of the way "ignorant" or incorrigibly "idle," or even more "reckless" than the majority of their civilian friends (a cunning, underhand thrust that "reckless," a sneer or a compliment at will), feel a debt of gratitude to one who has taken pains to disprove charges unanswerable by the indicted without incurring a further charge of trumpet-blowing. The writer can answer for it that British officers have felt these charges keenly, even though the confession may give pleasure to the anonymous arm-chaired critics who have made them. By many a bivouac-fire and on many a lonely picket they have been discussed and ruminated upon. Perhaps even in perilous advances they have occurred to their victims, until every shell shrieked "ignorant" and every bullet spat "stupid" at the man who knew enough, at any rate, to be hurrying his idle feet into the very gates of death much faster than any ignored drill-book ever laid down. Well, well, we will not reopen the wound, but will content ourselves with deploring that it was ever inflicted by friends behind upon friends already sufficiently busy with enemies in front. It was ill-timed, at least, and will the critics be satisfied, for the present, with the brief plea which the writer ventures to make on behalf of all British officers at the front? "We have done our best: no man can do more; many might not have done so much, and we are sorry it has not been good enough."

So much for the officer. It is of the man, Private Thomas Atkins, he who forms a nine-hundredth part of the old Blankshire Regiment, that this paper proposes to treat, — as he looks, thinks, and, above all, acts, in the presence of the enemy. He at least is appreciated at his value. The daily paper, the weekly illustrated, the monthly magazine, the quarterly condensation of "cultchaw," know him well, and, knowing him, love him and say so. In Parliament Demosthenes waxes fulsome over him; even Thersites is silent in his presence, or at least contents himself with a verbal lash at the amount of money he costs. The atmosphere around the arm-chair—natural habitat of the carper—is genial and mild. The masses, too, close those of their myriad mouths which are wont to grumble and

[1] "Our Officers," 'Blackwood's Magazine,' July 1900.

growl at things imperial and expensive. Private Atkins is both, but he is from the masses himself, God bless him! and the myriad mouths roar their approbation when he conquers, or breathe a mighty sigh of sympathy when he has failed and perished; for, lucky nation that we are, he has a habit of seldom doing one without the other. In fact, there is no more universally beloved individual in the world than this same scarlet Atkins—a state of things which may at any moment flame up into ecstasy, what time he has exchanged the scarlet for his working suit of khaki, and is away on business. Then appear songs, double-adjectived and pathetico-comic, in his honour, to be trilled by fashionable actresses to fashionable audiences amid a shower of currency. Then do the thoughtless begin to make use of his phraseology in speech and print, veiling his grace-word under the euphemism "blessed," and deeming themselves mighty smart as they do so. Then do subscriptions pour in, and portentous funds accumulate for his relief, for his wife's relief, for the relief of the poor girl who ought to be his wife (not by any means so numerous a band as singers and audiences imagine), for the relief of the givers themselves in their admiration and love. It is Mr Atkins's apotheosis, and we say again that he deserves it, the more for being the man he is than the god they would make him.

But, in spite of all this, there is a vast amount of curiosity, and, inferentially, of ignorance, about this same Atkins when engaged at his trade—that is to say, on active service in such distant lands that even the roar of applause, the songs and the shoutings, reach him but faintly. By the time he comes home he will be greeted with but an echo of it, perhaps, for the interests of a civilised and busy people are many, and somebody else is always ready to skip on to the stage when the war ballet is done with. One of the commonest questions put by civilians to officers lately returned from the wars is, "How did the men behave" on such and such an occasion? And it is as commonly misunderstood, I think, by those who have to answer it. What the questioner wants to know is not the general tactical demeanour of the men, what the author of the drill-book—cold student of massed emotions—calls "*morale*," but something very much more personal and full of human interest. What said the men when the shells began to yell through the air; what manner of countenance did they bear when their pals fled from the ranks into eternity, perhaps in the middle of a sentence? Did you hear or see anything that a man may not see at an Aldershot field-day, when the word came to assault, and it became necessary to fix bayonets? Was the signal to retreat, accursed of soldiers, reflected in any manner upon their faces? A thousand things, which every one wants to know, but which can only be answered in moods of greatest confidence in deserted smoking-rooms, and

suchlike retired places, and not always then. The writer himself wanted to know them badly but a short year ago. Are soldiers ashamed of the psychology of their splendid profession? I can vouch that they are not ignorant of it, for it is the touchstone by which they test the metal of their subordinates in tight places. An officer who cannot feel the intangible waves of emotion that sweep over his men during the phases of a battle is no officer at all, or should not be: for is it not his business to make use of the tide, to carry his crew onward upon its rush, to bid them hang on fast and keep a good heart when it slackens or sucks back again; to look the other way and pretend he does not see when its ebb is low, and men look stonily at invisible things in the air, or wildly at things too visible on the earth beneath? A regimental officer should be able, and in spite of "stupidity" usually is able, to play upon the complex instrument of his men's emotions like Nachez upon his fiddle-strings. The big generals are mere organ-players compared to him—they pull the stops, and things happen, that is all; but the colonel and his centurions are the artists, and many a successful man, caught up to Olympus in the shape of the staff, has had his cup of joy embittered by the thought that the most interesting part of his profession lay behind him.

A soldier's first action! What volumes have been written upon it, speculative mostly, lurid invariably, realistic and truthful seldom, for the descriptions they deal in are usually of emotions a man *might* feel, nay, ought to feel on an occasion when the whole natural fabric of human life, thought, and instinct, is turned inside-out and rent to shreds. I speak of modern engagements only. Old time fighting with its knee to knee and blade to blade was natural enough. It was a venerable amusement even in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar, and his brother bandits. But for a man to stand up alive and warm, aware that huge invisible projectiles are hurtling towards him from invisible guns, with death unspeakable as their errand, that millions of deaths fill the air, in the shape of rifle bullets, that behind this screen of screaming steel lie thousands of men who hate him, who seek his blood, who would cheer with joy to see him—hitherto cherished and beloved—dashed into a dozen bloody fragments before their eyes, — this is an experience so utterly unnatural and new, that, strange to say, it defeats its own ends, and usually leaves unmoved those who undergo it for the first time. The writer's first taste of fire was an unexpected shelling of the camp when dinners were being prepared, and all men were in the peaceful frame of mind inseparable from the fragrant smell of cooking meat. A high whistle, like an escape of gas in the air, a heavy thud upon the ground between two rows of tents, an appalling crash and

a leap into the air of clods of earth, and a whirring and groaning of fragments of jagged iron, — these were the signs amidst which the faint boom of the gun responsible for them was almost unnoticed. Another and another, while men still gaped at the first: the camp was under fire sure enough. How very like the pictures was the bursting of the 40-lb. shells! All hands were ordered to seek shelter under the lee of a bit of rising ground in front; how were all hands taking it, considering that they were men who had only landed from the transport three days before? Apparently they were not "taking it" at all, in the sense of being affected by it. I have seen soldiers make more fuss over the upsetting of a perambulator than they did over the shouting of those grim messengers from the far-off kopje. Some slept, others lay grumbling at the spoilt dinner, a few took a mild interest in the destination of the shells, and laughed a little when they fell and burst in a totally different spot to what they had expected, or laughed a good deal when they fell and did not burst at all, as often happened. It was not an action, it is true, but it was "being shelled," and shelled at one's very front door; so surely one had a right to look for a blanched face or two, or even a nervous manner in some of the younger soldiers. These shells did not even kill the usual dog, and when they ceased (and the Boer gunners were no doubt counting the heaps of slain through their field-glasses) the hungry shelterers trooped back to their "dixies,"[1] and wasted not a thought upon them, until the "Maconochie"[2] had vanished, and there was nothing else to think of.

Then came Colenso. What finer frolicking ground for all the human emotions could be invented for all save one — the thrill of triumph? Hope, anger, fear, mortal terror, grief, bitter disappointment, humiliation, despair,—were there not grounds for them all and room for each? When had a great British army, complete in equipment, primed with health and confidence, led by a famous general — when had such an invincible machine ever failed before? Yet when did beaten men ever walk more calmly back from disaster than did those shattered brigades from that death-dealing river-bank, with the sun eating out their very senses above, and their legs failing from fatigue beneath them? A joke during such an inferno? I heard many, and many a grumble too, best sign of all, and many a regretful reference to the beer they knew they couldn't get and the beef they very strongly felt they ought to get. Brave men with hearts aright, not untouched by the horrors jostling you on every side; not unmoved even when poor Bill, next man to you, "oh'd" forth his soul suddenly and awfully with a bullet in

[1] Soldiers' rendering of Hindustani *dekshi*, a kettle. [2] Emergency ration.

his brain; not unmindful of the tragedy you were acting, or of "what they would say at home," but brushing it all aside in the hope that a defeat cheerfully taken might be no defeat at all. You were right, many an illusion born of barrack-room life was chased and beaten that day; you learnt to know each other, and your officers learnt to know you so well during those hours of agony, that instead of "My men," many a one was fain to whisper "My children."

But these are only generalities, albeit true ones enough. The battle of Colenso was no occasion for speculations upon the emotions of other people. Even one's own could not be quizzed from any analytical pedestal except by an investigator possessed of powers of detachment more than mortal. Yet certain incidents occur to the memory which may help to fill in the portrait we are trying to draw of Mr Atkins's mental attitude in battle. Early in the advance, long before the stupendous folly of it had dawned upon any one, great shells were falling among the long lines of troops, for the most part between them, throwing up brown geysers of soft earth all over the huge meadow over which the army was spread. One of these monsters landed with a shriek and a thump between the writer and the company he was leading, and burst with a magnificent whirring roar. What did that company do? Did they suck back and pause —the very mildest expression of fear in a frightened man? Did a single foot remain poised in the middle of a step until that explosion had spent itself? Not one. The company certainly lost its perfect alignment for a moment, because the men in the immediate vicinity of the cataclysm were edging rapidly *towards* it to search for fragments of the shattered projectile, and to stare at the hole it had blasted in the ground!

Farther on, when we had entered that spitting, humming zone of rifle-fire, the like of which no living soldier had ever before witnessed, a bullet skimmed along the top of a man's head, just grazing the skin, and flicking off the hair in its course. Surely the time for a prayer, or even a shriek, if ever there were one. "I've just had a free 'air-cut, mates!" was the only observation heard by the officer who witnessed this ghastly jest of the Pale One. Then came that series of spasmodic rushes from ant-hill to ant-hill, which formed the last portion of that never-to-be-forgotten advance. Rifle-fire has often been compared to hail, but it is pretty safe to say that it never gave a more faithful representation than it did upon the smooth veldt between those merciful ant-hills. Is it credible that rough jokes, loud inquiries after the welfare of friends next door, or rather next heap, could be heard sounding from ant-hill to ant-hill from jolly red faces pressed against them behind? It may not be credible but it is history. Then the

pom-pom, heard for the first time,—it was a little hard on that keen-eyed watch-dog of a gun that its awesome barking should be imitated to the very life by its intended victims themselves. But, alas! British soldiers have no sense of dignity; they are never dignified themselves of malice aforethought, and if that busy piece had listened, it might have heard "pom-pom-pom-pom" from many throats *not* of cast steel. These are but skimmings, mere drops from that ocean of incidents, but, as Mr Pecksniff said, "they testify."

After that the retirement. The red faces lose their jollity in a flash, as they turn at the word of command from those vicious kopjes behind to the distant camp. All the weariness of those ten hours, the hunger and thirst, the thoughts of dead comrades, perhaps most of all the sorrow for dead hopes, set their seal upon the British countenances as if by magic. That tramp back, even after it had dragged itself out of reach of the long arms of the long French guns, was a dismal enough experience. Unreally slow, too, though there was no thought of impressing the enemy by a retirement of studied leisure. But they *must* have been impressed, nevertheless, even more than by the callous advance earlier in the day; and subsequent conversations with Boers go to show that many a patriot mouth and pair of eyes opened very wide indeed at the spectacle of human beings literally unstoppable by flying lead. It was Sir John Moore who said that British soldiers were "no good in a retirement." Well, the campaign in South Africa has slain yet another hoary delusion. Not that they are to be accounted pleasant, companionable people in such a situation. Wordsworth—child of peace that he was, it is almost sacrilege to quote him in this connection — has two lines which describe the retreating soldiery to a nicety, like

> "a party in a parlour,
> . . . . .
> All silent and all damned!"

And sulky, it may be added, looking severely to the front, which *ought* to be the rear, in prickly unapproachable mood, tactically defeated, but morally bursting with a savagery that would have speedily forced a bloody triumph if the general would have but let them sacrifice themselves.

There were many retirements for the army of Natal after that, as all the world knows—some melancholy, some as unemotional and as passive as lead, one terrible and full of gloom, one of romantic suspense and risk. The writer hopes to describe them in detail some day, for, thank God that a soldier can say so, they form a chapter in our military history to be read with as much pride for the "lads in red" as ever glowed in an Englishman's heart at any tale of victory. There is a triumph of defeat as well as of glory; few soldiers in the world but our own have ever gained it. No soldiers but our own have ever turned

their backs on an exulting foe, with their discipline intact—nay, more rigid and dignified than before; with their spirit as high, their courage as steadfast, their faith in a gallant commander grappling with a wellnigh impossible task as unshaken as that of any army which ever rushed to victory at its first onset.

It is a commonplace amongst soldiers that the severest test to which men can be subjected is a long and severe dose of artillery-fire, without a chance of reprisal, or being permitted to advance. The God of war saw fit to impose this test upon General Hillyard's 2nd brigade on the penultimate day of our precarious occupation of Vaal-Krantz. For fifteen hours shells fell upon that miserable kopje from a 40-pounder perched upon Spion Kop, from six 7-pounders on Brakfontein, from two pom-poms in varying positions, from a 3-inch Creusot in its usual state of hurry, from an irascible old gentleman of a 94-pounder on Doorn Kloof. Wheugh-bang! Piff, piff, piff! Orrgh-crash! Never did bird-fanciers recognise more certainly the different notes of the warblers of the grove than did those 3000 lodgers on the kopje the respective voices of those vile, unceasing shells. Some died, some were carried away on dripping stretchers before they could learn the full gamut. And the survivors? The few within the writer's ken—quarrelled! During a lucid interval in the shelling, the regimental cooks (never-failing worthies, shall no pen do ye the honour ye merit some day?) had contrived to make and distribute tea to the men lying prone in their shelters. The distribution was *not*, perhaps, impartial. The menace of 94-lb. shrapnel would make a liquor-measure uncertain with the eyes of a hundred Government inspectors glued upon it! So there arose a bickering. Tom, down below, must obviously have taken more than his share, else how came it that Mick above (the kopje was shaped like a mansard roof) had to content himself with less? "Peace!" yelled the monstrous shrapnel at the height of the argument; "Shut up!" snapped the pom-pom shells; "Silence!" boomed the far-off 40-pounder. Not a bit of it. No foreign-made projectile ever fired shall stop a Briton well under weigh with a grievance! That argument flourished amazingly under the shower, and only died away when the glaring sun overhead began to induce an unforgiving slumber in defrauded Micks and impugned, indignant Toms. A straw again, but a significant one.

The writer was once surprised at raising quite a little controversial storm by a suggestion he ventured to make in the course of an article in which he was attempting to contrast the soldier of fact with the soldier of fiction. In enumerating the causes which in his opinion induced men to enlist, and ascribing to each its estimated commonness or rarity, the "desire for glory" was labelled "rare," to the vast in-

dignation of a great many civilian readers, and the somewhat apologetic acquiescence of certain military ones. The campaign in the Transvaal has given little reason to change the docket,—it rather confirms it. The British soldier does not *desire* glory. That he wins it, drinks it to the full, whole beakers of it, is beside the point, but nothing is further from his thoughts at the very moment that he is quaffing his deepest draughts of it. It is his very unconsciousness of his heroism which makes him the hero he is. Under fire, in the rush of a charge, shattering an onslaught of the enemy's, commonplacedness—even what on other occasions might be dubbed vulgarity—is heroic, because at such times to the man who is not a hero these things are the most impossible in the world. I tremble for the British army when it shall go into action thinking of despatches, of war correspondents, of glorious graves, and the throbbing of great organs at memorial services. It thinks of none of these things at present. It thinks rather of unattainable beer or tea, of the next camping-ground, of its balance credit in the savings bank, of the probable duration of its dubious pair of contract boots. It thinks these ridiculous trivialities, and does great deeds to their accompaniment. It does not think of, and therefore cannot desire, glory, and for that very reason it wins it. For the desire of glory is an unhealthy mental condition, conducive to tenseness of nerve, to reaction when the Holy Grail is apparently fading away before the eyes, to despair when it has vanished. Any one of this psychological trio would be fatal in a private soldier, so that Providence, having seen fit to decree that the British private was to be the most perfect exponent of his branch of business in existence, wisely withheld them all from him, and gave him the prize itself, instead of the yearning for it, with its drawbacks.

A little knowledge is, proverbially, a dangerous thing. Hence there is no man more surprised at the bravery and endurance of his men than an officer who has walked with them only in the paths of peace. He is far more unprepared for it than the British public, which may be said to be entirely ignorant of every part of soldiers' characters not portrayable in sixpenny magazines—by far the greater part, needless to say. He is, of course, more unprepared for it than the man of many battles, who has seen and handled the pawns in the great game before. It must be admitted that there is little in the average Tommy's deportment in barracks at home to indicate the amazing qualities latent within him, only to be drawn out by the stress of combat. He does not appear to possess any extraordinary amount of endurance, for instance; one may witness more men falling out on a summer's day stroll to the Fox Hills and back than have been seen on any of the many and arduous forced marches in South Africa, performed often by sleepless and

unfed men, sometimes with the depression of defeat heavy upon them. Nor is his sense of discipline overwhelming in the piping times of peace. Indeed, one may meet venerable officers in a serious state of alarm at the free-and-easiness of the latter-day soldier, and younger ones indignant and disheartened at the apparent absence of the "military sense" in their over-educated charges. There is no cause for alarm or indignation. Education has successfully refuted the gravest charge ever brought against it. It has not lessened true discipline—nay, it must have increased it, for the army in South Africa has differed from no army that ever took the field before, save in being more educated and more perfectly disciplined.

But there is nothing mortal that can be unreservedly praised, and it would be a *most* untruthful portrait of Mr Atkins that showed him proudly standing, with a simper of unblemished monotonous perfection upon his heroic countenance. One would expect to see the legend, "Penny plain, twopence coloured," on such a picture, which would be dear at the price, because it would not be a portrait at all. He has his military imperfections. Moreover, he has suffered from them in a contest with a foe who happened to excel in the very points in which he was weakest; and without perceptible improvement on his part, from which it is fair to deduce that they are incurable. In the first place, he is slow to perceive a danger or a possible advantage, slow to meet the first or seize the latter. Danger he rarely sees until it is upon him, and he is forced to call into play the power in which he is pre-eminent over any fighting men in the world—that of extricating himself from it with success and honour. It would surprise the reader, unlearned in military history, if some statistician were to show him how many of the deeds of glory which illumine its pages have been done as atonement for mistakes, some on the part of careless officers, more of careless men. It would astonish the same unlearned reader if the same statistician were to draw up the casualty lists which might have been reduced by two-thirds, had certain attacks, or other manœuvres, been made a few hours or moments sooner,—manœuvres whose tactical soundness was nullified by the slowness and unpreparedness of the men. The men are casual, too, a quality that does not appear at all heroic, but exceedingly annoying and worrying to anxious regimental officers, who perhaps would as soon lose a relation as one of their charges. They take no care of themselves, and look with an exasperating air of indulgence and pity upon any man who takes care of them. If snug cover is, by some happy chance, to be had during heavy fire, it occurs to them as being a suitable coign of vantage from which to survey the enemy or to take in the details of the engagement; sometimes nothing short of threats will keep those helmeted heads below the life-saving parapet of the trenches or sangars. In

connection with the "tea-fight" upon Vaal-Krantz, I would be afraid to say how many of the debaters attempted to assume that ascendancy which an upright position was bound to afford over a prone position; and Mr Gully had never more need of his stern word of command to induce a contentious member to resume his seat, than had the writer with his argumentative little House upon that shell-stricken ridge.

Another great fault discernible in our soldiers is their too great dependence upon their officers. For this, it may be urged, their training is responsible; but though partially true, I think that the genius for being led is so ingrained in our men that independent, unsuperintended action can never be expected of them. No men will do better what they are directed to do, but no men are less likely to do the right thing in the absence of their accustomed director. This is curious, because a British soldier is infinitely more intelligent than thousands of his enemies, for whom officers would be almost useless, so well does each individual adapt himself, of his own initiative, to the varying requirements of an action. This difference will never be better exemplified than it has been during the campaign against the Boers. There can be no comparison between the intellectual capacity of the dopper farmer and that of the average British private, so great is the advantage held by the latter; and bodily strength and activity being about equal, "the betting" would appear to be odds on the Briton, numbers and other things being equal. But I think that most soldiers will agree that if a dozen Boers and a dozen English private soldiers were to be pitted against each other, say from opposite ends of a three-mile stretch of average South African country, the Britons would probably be surrounded, without, perhaps, having caught even so much as a glimpse of their opponents, unless the glimpse were given them on purpose. To begin with, they would probably insist on sticking together, and, in the absence of an officer to remind them of it, would as likely as not even forget, or be unwilling, to extend in open order, until they were actually fired upon; whereas the Boers, on mischief bent, would at once proceed to occupy as much front as British conventions have hitherto accorded to an army corps. Here we have another fault, the inveterate love of company, when it is not only not desirable, but possibly fatal. (Remember that by "fault" is meant unmilitary fault only, a disability in the presence of the enemy, which may or may not be superable.) Then it is exceedingly probable that our dozen Tommies, representatives of probably the worst topographists in the world, would lose their direction in the first hollow or donga they came upon, losing at the same time, of course, their knowledge of the way back in case of need. They would certainly neglect to watch their flanks, or provide

against surprise by detaching one or two of their number to scout ahead of them. They would certainly never think of scanning the country from the first eminence, in order to form a guess as to the most likely spot an enemy might be in wait for them. They would equally certainly (we are presuming that the actual presence of their opponents is unknown to them except as a possibility) lose all interest or suspicion after a quarter of an hour's unmolested advance, and would then possibly elect to snatch a few moments' rest and relaxation, as likely as not in a shady dingle-bottom, to the edges of which a hundred elephants could stalk unseen and look down upon them. In fact, they would do everything they ought not to do, and that a Boer would not do, and leave undone pretty nearly everything they ought to do for their own defence and the confusion of the enemy. Want of training, or ill-directed training, is, I say again, not entirely responsible for this. No amount of training will give a man who is so essentially a man as Atkins that animal sense which all Boers and savages naturally possess, and which many of his officers have either acquired by practice or bitter experience, or supplement by precautions which may be called its artificial equivalents. He is neither cautious nor cunning, nor apt to profit by practice or bitter experience. He prefers to trust to his phenomenal luck and phenomenal courage, but, better than all, to his officer. Undoubtedly a handicap in the great stakes, for officers cannot always be present; they are as recognised a billet for bullets, too, as their non-commissioned comrades, and it would be a great thing for the army if their men could become aware of their absence without the uneasy consciousness that their chief safeguard — their eyes, ears, and brains — had gone with them.

But having said this, I have said all. The list of Tommy's deficiencies is as nothing compared to that of his military virtues. He is brave, enduring, disciplined, cheerful under misfortune, temperate in success; modest withal, and prone to forget, with surprising quickness, deeds which live for ever in the minds of his compatriots at home. He is everything, in fact, that a soldier should be, save in one particular; and it is difficult as an Englishman not to secretly accord him yet another good mark, when we learn that the missing virtue is cunning!

LINESMAN.

LORD JIM: A SKETCH.—CONCLUSION.[1]

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

CHAPTER XLI.

"To the very last moment, till the full day came upon them with a spring, the fires on the west bank blazed bright and clear; and then Brown saw in a knot of coloured figures motionless between the advanced houses a man in European clothes, in a helmet, all white. 'That's him; look! look!' Cornelius said excitedly. All Brown's men had sprung up and crowded at his back with lustreless eyes. The group of vivid colours and dark faces with the white figure in their midst were observing the knoll. Brown could see naked arms being raised to shade the eyes and other brown arms pointing. What should he do? He looked around, and the forests that faced him on all sides walled the cock-pit of an unequal contest. He looked once more at his men. A contempt, a weariness, the desire of life, the wish to try for one more chance — for some other grave—struggled in his breast. From the outline the figure presented it seemed to him that the white man there, backed up by all the power of the land, was examining his position through binoculars. Brown jumped up on the log, throwing his arms up, the palms outwards. The coloured group closed round the white man, and fell back twice before he got clear of them, walking slowly alone. Brown remained standing on the log till Jim, appearing and disappearing between the patches of thorny scrub, had nearly reached the creek; then Brown jumped off and went down to meet him on his side.

"They met, I should think, not very far from the place, perhaps on the very spot, where Jim took the second desperate leap of his life—the leap that landed him into the life of Patusan, into the trust, the love, the confidence of the people. They faced each other across the creek, and with steady eyes tried to understand each other before they opened their lips. Their antagonism must have been expressed in their glances; I know that Brown hated Jim at first sight. Whatever hopes he might have had vanished at once. This was not the man he had expected to see. He hated him for this—and in a checked flannel shirt with sleeves cut off at the elbows, grey bearded, with a sunken, sun-blackened face — he cursed in his heart the other's youth and assurance, his clear eyes and his untroubled bearing. That fellow had got in a long way before him! He did not look like a man who would be willing

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to give anything for assistance. He had all the advantages on his side — possession, security, power; he was on the side of an overwhelming force! He was not hungry and desperate, and he did not seem in the least afraid. And there was something in the very neatness of Jim's clothes, from the white helmet to the canvas leggings and the pipeclayed shoes, which in Brown's sombre irritated eyes seemed to belong to things he had in the very shaping of his life contemned and flouted.

"'Who are you?' asked Jim at last, speaking in his usual voice. 'My name's Brown,' answered the other loudly. 'Captain Brown. What's yours?' and Jim after a little pause went on quietly, as if he had not heard: 'What made you come here?' 'You want to know,' said Brown bitterly. 'It's easy to tell. Hunger. And what made you?'

"'The fellow started at this,' said Brown, relating to me the opening of this strange conversation between those two men, separated only by the muddy bed of a creek, but standing on the opposite poles of that conception of life which includes all mankind—'The fellow started at this and got very red in the face. Too big to be questioned, I suppose. I told him that if he looked upon me as a dead man with whom you may take liberties, he himself was not a whit better off really. I had a fellow up there who had a bead drawn on him all the time, and only waited for a sign from me. There was nothing to be shocked at in this. He had come down of his own freewill. "Let us agree," said I, "that we are both dead men, and let us talk on that basis, as equals. We are all equal before death," I said. I admitted I was there like a rat in a trap, but we had been driven to it, and even a trapped rat can give a bite. He caught me up in a moment. "Not if you don't go near the trap till the rat is dead." I told him that sort of game was good enough for these native friends of his, but I would have thought him too white to serve even a rat so. Yes, I had wanted to talk with him. Not to beg for my life, though. My fellows were — well — what they were —men like himself, anyhow. All we wanted from him was to come on in the devil's name and have it out. "God d—n it," said I, while he stood there as still as a wooden post, "you don't want to come out here every day with your glasses to count how many of us are left on our feet. Come. Either bring your infernal crowd along or let us go out and starve in the open sea, by God! You have been white once, for all your tall talk of this being your own people and you being one with them. Are you? And what the devil do you get for it; what is it you've found here that is so d—d precious? Hey? You don't want us to come down here perhaps—do you? You are two hundred to one. You don't want us to come down into the open. Ah! I promise you we shall give you some sport before you've done. You talk about me making a cowardly set upon unoffending people. What's that to me that

they are unoffending when I am starving for next to no offence? But I am not a coward. Don't you be one. Bring them along or, by all the fiends, we shall yet manage to send half of your unoffending town to heaven with us in smoke!"'

"He was terrible — relating this to me—this tortured skeleton of a man drawn up together with his face over his knees, upon a miserable bed in that wretched hovel, and lifting his head to look at me with malignant triumph.

"'That's what I told him—I knew what to say,' he began again, feebly at first, but working himself up with incredible speed into a fiery utterance of his scorn. 'We aren't going into the forest to wander like a string of living skeletons dropping one after another for ants to go to work upon us before we are fairly dead. Oh no! . . . "You don't deserve a better fate," he said. "And what do you deserve," I shouted at him, "you that I find skulking here with your mouth full of your responsibility, of innocent lives, of your infernal duty? What do you know more of me than I know of you? I came here for food. D'ye hear?—food to fill our bellies. And what did *you* come for? What did you ask for when you came here? We don't ask you for anything but to give us a fight or a clear road to go back whence we came. . . ." "I would fight with you now," says he, pulling at his little moustache. "And I would let you shoot me, and welcome," I said. "This is as good a jumping-off place for me as another. I am sick of my infernal luck. But it would be too easy. There are my men in the same boat—and, by God, I am not the sort to jump out of trouble and leave them in a d—d lurch," I said. He stood thinking for a while and then wanted to know what I had done ("out there" he says, tossing his head down-stream) to be hazed about so. "Have we met to tell each other the story of our lives?" I asked him. "Suppose you begin. No? Well, I am sure I don't want to hear. Keep it to yourself. I know it is no better than mine. I've lived—and so did you, though you talk as if you were one of those people that should have wings so as to go about without touching the dirty earth. Well—it is dirty. I haven't got any wings. I am here because I was afraid once in my life. Want to know what of? Of a prison. That scares me, and you may know it—if it's any good to you. I won't ask you what scared you into this infernal hole, where you seem to have found pretty pickings. That's your luck and this is mine—the privilege to beg for the favour of being shot quickly, or else kicked out to go free and starve in my own way." . . .'

"His debilitated body shook with an exultation so vehement, so assured, and so malicious that it seemed to have driven off the death waiting for him in that hut. The corpse of his mad self-love uprose from rags and destitution as from the dark horrors of a tomb. It is impossible to say how much he lied to Jim then, how

much he lied to me now—and to himself always. Vanity plays lurid tricks with our memory, and the truth of every passion wants some pretence to make it live. Standing at the gate of the other world in the guise of a beggar, he had slapped this world's face, he had spat on it, he had thrown upon it an immensity of scorn and revolt at the bottom of his misdeeds. He had overcome them all — men, women, savages, traders, ruffians, missionaries—and Jim—that beefy-faced beggar. I did not begrudge him this triumph *in articulo mortis*, this almost posthumous illusion of having trampled all the earth under his feet. While he was boasting to me, in his sordid and repulsive agony, I couldn't help thinking of the chuckling talk relating to the time of his greatest splendour when, during a year or more, Gentleman Brown's ship was to be seen, for many days on end, hovering down Erromanga way, off an islet befringed with green upon azure, with the dark dot of the mission-house on a white beach; while Gentleman Brown, ashore, was casting the spell of his fame over a romantic girl for whom Melanesia had been too much, and giving hopes of a remarkable conversion to her husband. The poor man, some time or other, had been heard to express the hope of winning 'Captain Brown to a better way of life.' . . . 'Bag Gentleman Brown for Glory'—as a leery-eyed loafer expressed it once—'just to let them see up above what a Western Pacific trading skipper looks like.' And this was the man, too, who had run off with a dying woman, and had shed tears over her body. 'Carried on like a big baby,' his then mate was never tired of telling, 'and where the fun came in may I be kicked to death by diseased Kanakas if *I* know. Why, gents! She was too far gone when he brought her aboard to know him; she just lay there on her back in his bunk staring at the beam with awful shining eyes—and then she died. Dam' bad sort of fever, I guess. . . .' I remembered all these stories while, wiping his matted lump of a beard with a livid bony hand, he was telling me from his noisome couch how he got round, got in, got home, on that confounded, immaculate, don't-you-touch-me sort of fellow. He admitted that he couldn't be scared, but there was a way, 'as broad as a turnpike, to get in and shake his twopenny soul around and inside out and upside down—by God!'"

CHAPTER XLII.

"I don't think he could do more than perhaps look upon that straight path. He seemed to have been puzzled by what he saw, for he interrupted himself in his narrative more than once to exclaim, 'He nearly slipped from me there. I could not make him out. Who was he?' And after

glaring at me wildly he would go on, jubilating and sneering. To me the conversation of these two across the creek appears now as the deadliest kind of duel on which Fate looked on with her cold-eyed knowledge of the end. No, he didn't turn Jim's soul inside out, but I am much mistaken if the spirit so utterly out of his reach had not been made to taste to the full the bitterness of that contest. These were the emissaries with whom the world he had renounced was pursuing him in his retreat. White men from 'out there' where he did not think himself good enough to live. This was all that came to him—a menace, a shock, a danger to his work. I suppose it is this sad, half-resentful, half-resigned feeling, piercing through the few words Jim said now and then, that puzzled Brown so much in the reading of his character. Some great men owe most of their greatness to the ability of detecting in those they destine for their tools the exact quality of strength that matters for their work; and Brown, as though he had been really great, had a satanic gift of finding out the best and the weakest spot in his victims. He admitted to me that Jim wasn't of the sort that can be got over by truckling, and accordingly he took care to show himself as a man confronting without dismay ill-luck, censure, and disaster. The smuggling of a few guns was no great crime, he pointed out. As to coming to Patusan, who had the right to say he hadn't come to beg? The infernal people here let loose at him from both banks without staying to ask questions. He made the point brazenly, for, in truth, Dain Waris's energetic action has prevented the greatest calamities; because Brown told me distinctly that, perceiving the size of the place, he had resolved instantly in his mind that as soon as he had gained a footing he would set fire right and left, and begin by shooting down everything living in sight, in order to cow and terrify the population. The disproportion of forces was so great that this was the only way giving him the slightest chance of attaining his ends—he argued in a fit of coughing. But he didn't tell Jim this. As to the hardships and starvation they had gone through, these had been very real; it was enough to look at his band. He made, at the sound of a shrill whistle, all his men appear standing in a row on the logs in full view, so that Jim could see them. For the killing of the man, it had been done—well, it had—but was not this war, bloody war—in a corner? and the fellow had been killed cleanly, shot through the chest, not like that poor devil of his lying now in the creek. They had to listen to him dying for six hours, with his entrails torn with slugs. At any rate this was a life for a life. . . . And all this was said with the weariness, with the recklessness of a man spurred on and on by ill-luck till he cares not where he runs. Not a gleam of light, not a break in the mischance. When

he asked Jim, with a sort of brusque despairing frankness, whether he himself — straight now — didn't understand that when 'it came to saving one's life in the dark, one didn't care who else went — three, thirty, three hundred people'—it was as if a demon had been whispering advice in his ear. 'I made him wince,' boasted Brown to me. 'He very soon left off coming the righteous over me. He just stood there with nothing to say, and looking as black as thunder—not at me—on the ground.' He asked Jim whether he had nothing fishy in his life to remember that he was so damnedly hard upon a man trying to get out of a deadly hole by the first means that came to hand—and so on, and so on. And there ran through the rough talk a vein of subtle reference to their common blood, an assumption of common experience; a sickening suggestion of common guilt, of a secret knowledge that was like a bond of their minds and their hearts.

"At last Brown threw himself down full length and watched Jim out of the corners of his eyes. Jim on his side of the creek stood thinking and switching his leg. The houses in view were silent as if a pestilence had swept them clean of every breath of life; but many invisible eyes watched, from within, the two men with the creek between them, a stranded white boat, and the body of the third man half sunk in the mud. On the river canoes were moving again, for Patusan was recovering its belief in the stability of earthly institutions since the return of the white lord. The right bank, the platforms of the houses, the rafts moored along the shores, even the roofs of bathing-huts, were covered with people that, far away out of earshot and almost out of sight, were straining their eyes towards the knoll beyond the Rajah's stockade. Within the wide irregular ring of forests, broken in two places by the sheen of the river, there was a silence. 'Will you promise to leave the coast?' Jim asked. Brown lifted and let fall his arm, giving everything up as it were—accepting the inevitable. 'And surrender your arms?' Jim went on. Brown sat up and glared across. 'Surrender our arms! Not till you come to take them out of our stiff hands. You think I am gone crazy with funk? Oh no! That and the rags I stand in is all I have got in the world, besides a few more breech-loaders on board; and I expect to sell the lot in Madagascar, if I ever get so far, —begging my way from ship to ship.'

"Jim said nothing to this. At last, throwing away the switch he held in his hand, he said, as if speaking to himself, 'I don't know whether I have the power. . . .' 'You don't know! And you wanted me just now to give up my arms! That's good, too,' cried Brown. 'Suppose they say one thing to you, and do the other thing to me.' He calmed down markedly. 'I daresay you have the power, or what's the meaning

of all this talk?' he continued. 'What did you come down here for? To pass the time of day?'

"'Very well,' said Jim, lifting his head suddenly after a long silence. 'You shall have a clear road or a clear fight.' He turned on his heel and walked away.

"Brown got up at once, but he did not go up the hill till he had seen Jim disappear between the first houses. He never set his eyes on him again. On his way back he met Cornelius slouching down with his head between his shoulders. He stopped before Brown. 'Why didn't you kill him?' he demanded in a sour, discontented voice. 'Because I could do better than that,' Brown said with an amused smile. 'Never! never!' protested Cornelius with energy. 'Couldn't. I have lived here for many years.' Brown looked up at him curiously. There were many sides to the life of that place in arms against him; things he would never find out. Cornelius slunk past dejectedly in the direction of the river. He was now leaving his new friends; he accepted the disappointing course of events with a sulky obstinacy which seemed to draw more together his little yellow old face; and as he went down he glanced askant here and there, never giving up his fixed idea.

"Henceforth events move fast without a check, flowing from the very hearts of men like a stream from a dark source, and we see Jim amongst them, mostly through Tamb' Itam's eyes. The girl's eyes had watched him too, but her life is too much entwined with his: there is her passion, her wonder, her anger, and, before all, her fear and her unforgiving love. Of the faithful servant, uncomprehending as the rest of them, it is the fidelity alone that comes into play; a fidelity and a belief in his lord so strong that even amazement is subdued to a sort of saddened acceptance of a mysterious failure. He has eyes only for one figure, and through all the mazes of bewilderment he preserves his air of guardianship, of obedience, of care.

"His master came back from his talk with the white men, walking slowly towards the stockade in the street. Everybody was rejoiced to see him return, for while he was away every man was afraid not only of him being killed, but also of what would come after. Jim went into one of the houses where old Doramin had retired, and remained alone for a long time with the head of the Bugis settlers. No doubt he discussed the course to follow with him then, but no man was present at the conversation. Only Tamb' Itam, keeping as close to the door as he could, heard his master say, 'Yes. I shall let all the people know that such is my wish; but I spoke to you, O Doramin, before all the others, and alone; for you know my heart as well as I know yours and its greatest desire. But you know well also that I have no thought but for the people's good.' Then his master, lifting the sheeting in the doorway, went out, and he, Tamb' Itam, had

a glimpse of old Doramin within, sitting in the chair with his hands on his knees, and looking between his feet. Afterwards he followed his master to the fort, where all the principal Bugis and Patusan inhabitants had been summoned for a talk. Tamb' Itam himself hoped there would be some fighting. 'What was it but the taking of another hill?' he exclaimed mournfully. However, in the town many hoped that the rapacious strangers would be induced, by the sight of so many brave men making ready to fight, to go away. It would be a good thing if they went away. Since Jim's arrival had been made known before daylight by the gun fired from the fort and the beating of the big drum there, the fear that had hung over Patusan had broken and subsided like a wave on a rock, leaving the seething foam of excitement, curiosity, and endless speculation. Half of the population had been ousted out of their homes for purposes of defence, and were living in the street on the left side of the river, crowding round the fort, and in momentary expectation of seeing their abandoned dwellings on the threatened bank burst into flames. The general anxiety was to see the matter settled quickly. Food, through Jewel's care, had been served out to the refugees. Nobody knew what their white man would do. Some remarked that it was worse than in Sherif Ali's war. Then many people did not care; now everybody had something to lose. The movements of canoes passing to and fro between the two parts of the town were watched with interest. A couple of Bugis war-boats lay anchored in the middle of the stream to protect the river, and a thread of smoke stood at the bow of each; the men in them were cooking their midday rice when Jim, after his interviews with Brown and Doramin, crossed the river and entered by the water-gate of his fort. The people inside crowded round him so that he could hardly make his way to the house. They had not seen him before, because on his arrival during the night he had only exchanged a few words with the girl, who had come down to the landing-stage for the purpose, and had then gone on at once to join the chiefs and the fighting men on the other bank. People shouted greetings after him. One old woman raised a laugh by pushing her way to the front madly and enjoining him in a scolding voice to see to it that her two sons who were with Doramin did not come to harm at the hands of the robbers. Several of the bystanders tried to pull her away, but she struggled and cried, 'Let me go. What is this, O Muslims? This laughter is unseemly. Are they not cruel, bloodthirsty robbers bent on killing?' 'Let her be,' said Jim, and as a silence fell suddenly, he said slowly, 'Everybody shall be safe.' He entered the house before the great sigh, and the loud murmurs of satisfaction, had died out.

"There's no doubt his mind

was made up that Brown should have his way clear back to the sea. His fate, revolted, was forcing his hand. He had for the first time to affirm his will in the face of outspoken opposition. 'There was much talk, and at first my master was silent,' Tamb' Itam said. 'Darkness came, and then I lit the candles on the long table. The chiefs sat on each side, and the lady remained by my master's right hand.'

"When he began to speak the unaccustomed difficulty seemed only to fix his resolve more immovably. The white men were now waiting for his answer on the hill. Their chief had spoken to him in the language of his own people, making clear many things difficult to explain in any other speech. They were erring men whom suffering had made blind to right and wrong. It is true that lives had been lost already, but why lose more? He declared to his hearers, the assembled heads of the people, that their welfare was his welfare, their losses his losses, their mourning his mourning. He looked round at the grave listening faces and told them to remember that they had fought and worked side by side. They knew his courage . . . Here a murmur interrupted him . . . And that he had never deceived them. For many years they had dwelt together. He loved the land and the people living in it with a very great love. He was ready to answer with his life for any harm that should come to them if the white men with beards were allowed to retire. They were evil-doers, but their destiny had been evil too. Had he ever advised them ill? Had his words ever brought suffering to the people? he asked. He believed that it would be best to let these whites and their followers go with their lives. It would be a small gift. 'I whom you have tried and found always true ask you to let them go.' He turned to Doramin. The old Nakhoda made no movement. 'Then,' said Jim, 'call in Dain Waris, your son, my friend, for in this business I shall not lead.'"

CHAPTER XLIII.

"Tamb' Itam behind his chair was thunderstruck. The declaration produced an immense sensation. 'Let them go because this is best in my knowledge, which has never deceived you,' said Jim. There was a silence. In the darkness of the courtyard there could be heard the subdued whispering, shuffling noise of many people. Doramin raised his heavy head and said that there was no more reading of hearts than touching the sky with the hand, but—he consented. The others gave their opinion in turn. 'It is best,' 'Let them go,' and so on. But most of them simply said that they 'believed Tuan Jim.'

"In this simple form of

assent to his will lies the whole gist of the situation; their creed, his truth; and the testimony to that faithfulness which made him in his own eyes the equal of the impeccable men who never fall out of the ranks. Stein's words, 'Romantic!—Romantic!' seem to ring over those distances that will never give him up now to a world indifferent to his failing and his virtues, and to that ardent and clinging affection that refuses him the dole of tears in the bewilderment of a great grief and of eternal separation. From the moment the sheer truthfulness of his last three years of life carries the day against the ignorance, the fear, and the anger of men, he appears no longer to me as I saw him last—a white speck catching all the dim light left upon a sombre coast and the darkened sea—but greater and more pitiful in the loneliness of his soul, that remains even for her who loved him best a cruel and insoluble mystery.

"It is evident that he did not mistrust Brown; there was no reason to doubt the story, whose truth seemed warranted by the rough frankness, by a sort of virile sincerity in accepting the morality and the consequences of his acts. But Jim did not know the almost inconceivable egotism of the man which made him, when resisted and foiled in his will, mad with the indignant and revengeful rage of a thwarted autocrat. But if Jim did not mistrust Brown, he was evidently anxious that some misunderstanding should not occur, ending perhaps in collision and bloodshed. It was for this reason that directly the Malay chiefs had gone he asked Jewel to get him something to eat, as he was going out of the fort to take command in the town. On her remonstrating against this on the score of his fatigue, he said that something might happen for which he would never forgive himself. 'I am responsible for every life in the land,' he said. He was moody at first; she served him with her own hands, taking the plates and dishes (of the dinner-service presented him by Stein) from Tamb' Itam. He brightened up after a while; told her she would be again in command for another night. 'There's no sleep for us, old girl,' he said, 'while our people are in danger.' Later on he said jokingly that she was the best man of them all. 'If you and Dain Waris had done what you wanted, not one of these poor devils would be alive to-day.' 'Are they very bad?' she asked, leaning over his chair. 'Men act badly sometimes without being much worse than others,' he said after some hesitation.

"Tamb' Itam followed his master to the landing-stage outside the fort. The night was clear but without a moon, and the middle of the river was dark, while the water under each bank reflected the light of many fires 'as on a night of Ramadan,' Tamb' Itam said. War-boats drifted silently in the dark lane or, anchored, floated motionless with a loud ripple. That night there was much paddling in a canoe and walking at his master's heels for Tamb' Itam: up and down

the street they tramped, where the fires were burning, inland on the outskirts of the town where small parties of men kept guard in the fields. Tuan Jim gave his orders and was obeyed. Last of all they went to the Rajah's stockade, which a detachment of Jim's people manned on that night. The old Rajah had fled early in the morning with most of his women to a small house he had near a jungle village on a tributary stream. Kassim, left behind, had attended the council with his air of diligent activity to explain away the diplomacy of the day before. He was considerably cold-shouldered, but managed to preserve his smiling, quiet alertness, and professed himself highly delighted when Jim told him sternly that he proposed to occupy the stockade on that night with his own men. After the council broke up he was heard outside accosting this and that departing chief, and speaking in a loud, gratified tone of the Rajah's property being protected in the Rajah's absence.

"About ten or so Jim's men marched in. The stockade commanded the mouth of the creek, and Jim meant to remain there till Brown had passed below. A small fire was lit on the flat, grassy point outside the wall of stakes, and Tamb' Itam placed a little folding-stool for his master. Jim told him to try and sleep. Tamb' Itam got a mat and lay down a little way off; but he could not sleep, though he knew he had to go on an important journey before the night was out. His master walked to and fro before the fire with bowed head and with his hands behind his back. His face was sad. Whenever his master approached him Tamb' Itam pretended to sleep, not wishing his master to know he had been watched. At last his master stood still, looking down on him as he lay, and said softly, 'It is time.'

"Tamb' Itam arose directly and made his preparations. His mission was to go down the river, preceding Brown's boat by an hour or more, to tell Dain Waris finally and formally that the whites were to be allowed to pass out unmolested. Jim would not trust anybody else with that service. Before starting Tamb' Itam, more as a matter of form (since his position about Jim made him perfectly known), asked for a token. 'Because, Tuan,' he said, 'the message is important, and these are thy very words I carry.' His master first put his hand into one pocket, then into another, and finally took off his forefinger Stein's silver ring, which he habitually wore, and gave it to Tamb' Itam. When Tamb' Itam left on his mission, Brown's camp on the knoll was dark but for a single small glow shining through the branches of one of the trees the white men had cut down.

"Early in the evening Brown had received from Jim a folded piece of paper on which was written, 'You get the clear road. Start as soon as your boat floats on the morning tide. Let your men be careful. The

bushes on both sides of the creek and the stockade at the mouth are full of well-armed men. You would have no chance, but I don't believe you want bloodshed.' Brown read it, tore the paper into small pieces, and, turning to Cornelius, who had brought it, said jeeringly, 'Good-bye, my excellent friend.' Cornelius had been in the fort, and had been sneaking around Jim's house during the afternoon. Jim chose him to carry the note because he could speak English, was known to Brown, and was not likely to be shot by some nervous mistake of one of the men as a Malay approaching in the dusk perhaps might have been.

"Cornelius didn't go away after delivering the paper. Brown was sitting up over a tiny fire; all the others were lying down. 'I could tell you something you would like to know,' Cornelius mumbled crossly. Brown paid no attention. 'You did not kill him,' went on the other, 'and what do you get for it? You might have had money from the Rajah, besides the loot of all the Bugis houses, and now you get nothing.' 'You had better clear out from here,' growled Brown, without even looking at him. But Cornelius let himself drop by his side and began to whisper very fast, touching his elbow from time to time. What he had to say made Brown sit up at first, with a curse. He had simply informed him of Dain Waris's armed party down the river. At first Brown saw himself completely sold and betrayed, but a moment's reflection convinced him that there could be no treachery intended. He said nothing, and after a while Cornelius remarked, in a tone of complete indifference, that there was another way out of the river which he knew very well. 'A good thing to know, too,' said Brown, pricking up his ears; and Cornelius began to talk of what went on in town and repeated all that had been said in council, gossiping in an even undertone at Brown's ear as you talk amongst sleeping men you do not wish to wake. 'He thinks he has made me harmless, does he?' mumbled Brown very low. . . . 'Yes. He is a fool. A little child. He came here and robbed me,' droned on Cornelius, 'and he made all the people believe him. But if something happened that they did not believe him any more, where would he be? And the Bugis Dain who is waiting for you down the river there, captain, is the very man who chased you up here when you first came.' Brown observed nonchalantly that it would be just as well to avoid him, and with the same detached, musing air Cornelius declared himself acquainted with a backwater broad enough to take Brown's boat past Waris's camp. 'You will have to be quiet,' he said as an afterthought, 'for in one place we pass close behind his camp. Very close. They are camped ashore with their boats hauled up.' 'Oh, we know how to be as quiet as mice. Never fear,' said Brown. Cornelius stipulated that in case he were to pilot Brown out, his canoe

should be towed. 'I'll have to get back quick,' he explained.

"It was two hours before the dawn when word was passed to the stockade from outlying watchers that the white robbers were coming down to their boat. In a very short time every armed man from one end of Patusan to the other was on the alert, yet the banks of the river remained so silent that but for the fires burning with sudden blurred flares the town might have been asleep as if in peace-time. A heavy mist lay very low on the water, making a sort of illusive grey light that showed nothing. When Brown's long-boat glided out of the creek into the river, Jim was standing on the low point of land before the Rajah's stockade — on the very spot where for the first time he put his foot on Patusan shore. A shadow loomed up, moving in the greyness, solitary, very bulky, and yet constantly eluding the eye. A murmur of low talking came out of it. Brown at the tiller heard Jim speak calmly: 'A clear road. You had better trust to the current while it's so thick; but this will lift presently.' 'Yes, presently we shall see clear,' replied Brown.

"The thirty or forty men standing with muskets at ready outside the stockade held their breath. The Bugis owner of the prau, whom I saw on Stein's verandah, and who was amongst them, told me that the boat, shaving the low point close, seemed for a moment to grow big and hang over it like a mountain. 'If you think it worth your while to wait a day outside,' called out Jim, 'I'll try to send you down something—a bullock, some yams — what I can.' The high shadow went on moving. 'Yes. Do,' said a voice, blank and muffled out of the fog. Not one of the many attentive listeners understood what the words meant; and then Brown and his men in their boat floated away, fading spectrally without the slightest sound.

"Thus Brown, invisible in the mist, goes out of Patusan elbow to elbow with Cornelius in the stern-sheets of the long-boat. 'Perhaps you shall get a small bullock,' said Cornelius. 'Oh yes. Bullock. Yam. You'll get it if *he* said so. He always speaks the truth. He stole everything I had. I suppose you like a small bullock better than the loot of many houses.' 'I would advise you to hold your tongue, or somebody here may fling you overboard into this damned fog,' said Brown. The boat seemed to be standing still; nothing could be seen, not even the river alongside, only the water-dust flew and trickled, condensed, down their beards and faces. It was weird, Brown told me. Every individual man of them felt as though he were adrift alone in a boat, haunted by an almost imperceptible suspicion of sighing, muttering ghosts. 'Throw me out, would you? But I would know where I was,' mumbled Cornelius surlily. 'I've lived many years here.' 'Not long enough to see through a fog

like this,' Brown said, lolling back with his arm swinging to and fro on the useless tiller. 'Yes. Long enough for that,' snarled Cornelius. 'That's very useful,' commented Brown. 'Am I to believe you could find that backway you spoke of blindfold, like this?' Cornelius grunted. 'Are you too tired to row?' he asked after a silence. 'No, by God!' shouted Brown suddenly. 'Out with your oars there.' There was a great knocking in the fog, which after a while settled into a regular grind of invisible sweeps against invisible thole-pins. Otherwise nothing was changed, and but for the slight splash of a dipped blade it was like rowing a balloon car in a cloud, said Brown. Thereafter Cornelius did not open his lips except to ask querulously for somebody to bale out his canoe, which was towing behind the long-boat. Gradually the fog whitened and became luminous ahead. To the left Brown saw a darkness as though he had been looking at the back of the departing night. All at once a big bough covered with leaves appeared above his head, and ends of twigs dripping and still curved slenderly close alongside. Cornelius, without a word, took the tiller from his hand."

CHAPTER XLIV.

"I don't think they spoke together again. The boat entered a narrow by-channel, where it was pushed by the oar-blades set into crumbling banks, and there was a gloom as if enormous black wings had been outspread above the mist that filled its depth to the summits of the trees. The branches overhead showered big drops through the gloomy fog. At a mutter from Cornelius, Brown ordered his men to load. 'I'll give you a chance to get even with them before we're done, you dismal cripples, you,' he said to his gang. 'Mind you don't throw it away — you hounds.' Low growls answered that speech. Cornelius showed much fussy concern for the safety of his canoe.

"Meantime Tamb' Itam had reached the end of his journey. The fog had delayed him a little, but he had paddled steadily, keeping in touch with the south bank. By-and-by daylight came like a glow in a ground glass globe. The shores made on each side of the river a dark smudge, in which one could detect hints of columnar forms and shadows of twisted branches high up. The mist was still thick on the water, but a good watch was being kept, for as Tamb' Itam approached the camp the figures of two men emerged out of the white vapour, and voices spoke to him boisterously. He answered, and presently a canoe lay alongside of his dug-out, and he exchanged news with the paddlers. All was well. The trouble was over. Then the men in the canoe let go their grip on the side

of his dug-out and incontinently fell out of sight. He pursued his way till he heard voices coming to him quietly over the water, and saw now, under the lifting, swirling mist, the glow of many little fires burning on a sandy stretch, backed by lofty thin timber and bushes. There again a look-out was kept, for he was challenged. He shouted his name as the two last sweeps of his paddle ran his canoe up on the strand. It was a big camp. Men crouched in many little knots under a steady murmur of early morning talk. Many thin threads of smoke curled slowly on the white mist. Little shelters, elevated above the ground, had been built for the chiefs. Muskets were stacked in small pyramids, and long spears were stuck singly into the sand near the fires.

"Tamb' Itam, assuming an air of importance, demanded to be led to Dain Waris. He found the friend of his white lord lying on a raised couch made of bamboo, and sheltered by a sort of shed of sticks covered with mats. Dain Waris was awake, and a bright fire was burning before his sleeping place, which resembled a rude shrine. The only son of Nakhoda Doramin answered his greeting kindly. Tamb' Itam began by handing him the ring which vouched for the truth of the messenger's words. Dain Waris, reclining on his elbow, bade him speak and tell all the news. Beginning with the consecrated formula, 'The news is good,' Tamb' Itam delivered Jim's own words. The white men, departing with the consent of all the chiefs, were to be allowed to pass down the river. In answer to a question or two Tamb' Itam then reported the proceedings of the last council. Dain Waris listened attentively to the end, toying with the ring which ultimately he slipped on the forefinger of his right hand. After hearing all he had to say he dismissed Tamb' Itam to have food and rest. Orders for the return in the afternoon were given immediately. Afterwards Dain Waris lay down again, open-eyed, while his personal attendants were preparing his food at the fire, by which Tamb' Itam also sat talking to the men who lounged up to hear the latest intelligence from the town. The sun was eating up the mist. A good watch was kept upon the reach of the main stream where the boat of the whites was expected to appear every moment.

"It was then that Brown took his revenge upon the world which, after twenty years of contemptuous and reckless bullying, refused him the tribute of a common robber's success. It was an act of cold-blooded ferocity, and it consoled him on his death-bed like a memory of an indomitable defiance. Stealthily he landed his men on the other side of the island opposite to the Bugis camp, and led them across. After a short but quite silent scuffle Cornelius, who had tried to slink away at the moment of landing, resigned himself to

show the way where the undergrowth was most sparse. Brown held both his skinny hands together behind his back in the grip of one vast fist, and now and then impelled him forward with a fierce push. Cornelius remained as mute as a fish, abject but faithful to his purpose, whose accomplishment loomed before him dimly. At the edge of the patch of forest Brown's men spread themselves out in cover and waited. The camp was plain from end to end before their eyes, and no one looked their way. Nobody even dreamed that the white men could have any knowledge of the narrow channel at the back of the island. Both its entrances were so narrow and overgrown that the very natives passing in canoes had to look for them carefully. Brown yelled, 'Let them have it,' and fourteen shots rang out like one.

"Tamb' Itam told me the surprise was so great that, except for those who fell dead or wounded, not a soul of them moved for quite an appreciable time after the first discharge. Then a man screamed, and after that scream a great yell of amazement and fear went up from all the throats. A blind panic drove these men in a surging swaying mob to and fro along the shore like a herd of cattle afraid of the water. Some few jumped into the river then, but most of them did so only after the third discharge. Three times Brown's men fired into the ruck, Brown, the only one in view, cursing and yelling, 'Aim low! aim low!'

"Tamb' Itam says that, as for him, he understood at the first volley what had happened. Though untouched he fell down and lay as if dead, but with his eyes open. At the sound of the first shots Dain Waris, reclining on the couch, jumped up and ran out upon the open shore, just in time to receive a bullet in his forehead at the second discharge. Tamb' Itam saw him fling his arms wide open before he fell. Then, he says, a great fear came upon him—not before. The white men retired as they had come—unseen.

"Thus Brown balanced his account with the evil fortune. Notice that even in this awful outbreak there is a superiority as of a man who carries right—the abstract thing—within the envelope of his common desires. It was not a vulgar and treacherous massacre; it was a lesson, a retribution—a demonstration of some obscure and awful attribute of our nature which, I am afraid, is not so very far under the surface as we like to think.

"Afterwards the whites depart unseen by Tamb' Itam, and seem to vanish from before men's eyes altogether; and the schooner, too, vanishes after the manner of stolen goods. But a story is told of a white long-boat picked up a month later in the Indian Ocean by a cargo-steamer. Two parched, yellow, glassy-eyed, whispering skeletons in her recognised the authority of a third, who declared that his name was Brown. His schooner, he reported, bound south with a cargo of Java sugar, had sprung a bad leak and sank under his feet. He and his companions

were the survivors of a crew of six. The two died on board the steamer which rescued them. No matter. Brown lived to be seen by me, and I can testify that he had played his part to the last.

"It seems, however, that in going away they had neglected to cast off Cornelius's canoe. Cornelius himself Brown had let go at the beginning of the shooting, with a kick for a parting benediction. Tamb' Itam, after arising from amongst the dead, saw the Nazarene running about up and down the shore amongst the corpses and the expiring fires. He uttered little cries. Suddenly he rushed to the water, and made frantic efforts to get one of the Bugis boats into the water. 'Afterwards, till he had seen me,' related Tamb' Itam, 'he stood looking at the heavy canoe and scratching his head.' 'What became of him?' I asked. Tamb' Itam, staring hard at me, made an expressive gesture with his right arm. 'Twice I struck, Tuan,' he said. 'When he beheld me approaching he cast himself violently on the ground and made a great outcry, kicking. Twice I gave a blow. He screeched like a frightened hen till he felt the point; then he was still, and lay staring at me while his life went out of his eyes.'

"This done, Tamb' Itam did not tarry. He understood the importance of being the first with the awful news at the fort. There were, of course, many survivors of Dain Waris's party; but in the extremity of panic some had swam across the river, others had bolted into the bush. The fact is that they did not know really who struck that blow — whether more white robbers were not coming, whether they had not already got hold of the whole land. They imagined themselves to be the victims of a vast treachery, and utterly doomed to destruction. It is said that some small parties did not come in till three days afterwards. However, a few tried to make their way back to Patusan at once, and one of the canoes that were patrolling the river that morning was in sight of the camp at the very moment of the attack. It is true that at first the men in her leaped overboard and swam to the opposite bank, but afterwards they returned to their boat and started hesitatingly up-stream. Of these Tamb' Itam had an hour's advance."

CHAPTER XLV.

"When Tamb' Itam, paddling madly, came into the town-reach, the women, thronging the platforms before the houses, were looking out for the return of Dain Waris's little fleet of boats. The town had a festive air; here and there men, still with spears or guns in their hands, could be seen moving or standing on the shore in groups. Chinamen's shops had been opened early; but the market-place was empty, and a sentry, still posted at the corner of the fort, made out Tamb' Itam, and

shouted to those within. The gate was wide open. Tamb' Itam jumped ashore and ran in headlong. The first person he met was the girl coming down from the house.

"Tamb' Itam, disordered, panting, with trembling lips and wild eyes, stood for a time before her as if a sudden spell had been laid on him. Then he broke out very quickly: 'They have killed Dain Waris and many more.' She clapped her hands, and her first words were, 'Shut the gates.' Most of the fortmen had gone back to their houses, but Tamb' Itam hurried on the few who remained for their turn of duty within. The girl stood in the middle of the courtyard while the others ran about. 'Doramin,' she cried fearfully as Tamb' Itam passed her. Next time he went by he answered her thought rapidly, 'Yes. But we have all the powder in Patusan.' She caught him by the arm, and, pointing at the house, 'Call him out,' she whispered, trembling.

"Tamb' Itam ran up the steps. His master was sleeping. 'It is I, Tamb' Itam,' he cried at the door, 'with tidings that cannot wait.' He saw Jim turn over on the pillow and open his eyes, and he burst out at once. 'This, Tuan, is a day of evil, an accursed day.' His master raised himself on his elbow to listen — just as Dain Waris had done. And then Tamb' Itam began his tale, trying to relate the story in order, calling Dain Waris Panglima, and saying, 'The Panglima then called out to the chief of his own boatmen, "Give Tamb' Itam something to eat" '—when his master put his feet to the ground and looked at him with such a discomposed face that the words remained in his throat.

"'Speak out,' said Jim. 'Is he dead?' 'May you live long,' cried Tamb' Itam. 'It was a most cruel treachery. He ran out at the first shots and fell.' . . . His master walked to the window and with his fist struck at the shutter. The room was made light; and then in a steady voice, but speaking fast, he began to give him orders to assemble a fleet of boats for immediate pursuit, go to this man, to the other — send messengers; and as he talked he sat down on the bed, stooping to lace his boots hurriedly, and suddenly looked up. 'Why do you stand here?' he asked very red-faced. 'Waste no time.' Tamb' Itam did not move. 'Forgive me, Tuan, but . . . but,' he began to stammer. 'What?' cried his master aloud, looking terrible, leaning forward with his hands gripping the edge of the bed. 'It is not safe for thy servant to go out amongst the people,' said Tamb' Itam, after hesitating a moment.

"Then Jim understood. He had retreated from one world, for a small matter of an impulsive jump, and now the other, the work of his own hands, had fallen in ruins upon his head. It was not safe for his servant to go out amongst his own people! I believe that in that very moment he had decided to defy the disaster in the only way it occurred to him such a disaster could be defied;

but all I know is that without a word he came out of his room and sat before the long table, at the head of which he was accustomed to regulate the affairs of his world, proclaiming daily the truth that surely lived in his heart. But he was romantic—romantic—and nevertheless true. The dark powers should not rob him twice of his peace. He sat like a stone figure. Tamb' Itam, deferential, hinted at preparations for defence. The girl he loved came in and spoke to him, but he made a sign with his hand, and she was awed by the dumb appeal for silence in it. She went out on the verandah and sat on the threshold, as if to guard him with her body from dangers outside.

"What thoughts passed through his head—what memories? Who can tell. Everything was gone, and he who had been once unfaithful to his trust had lost again all men's confidence. It was then, I believe, he tried to write—to somebody—and gave it up. Loneliness was closing on him. People had trusted him with their lives—only for that; and yet they could never, as he had said, never be made to understand him. Those without did not hear him make a sound. Later, towards the evening, he came to the door and called for Tamb' Itam. 'Well,' he asked. 'There is much weeping. Much anger too,' said Tamb' Itam. Jim looked up at him. 'You know,' he murmured. 'Yes, Tuan,' said Tamb' Itam. 'Thy servant does know, and the gates are closed. We shall have to fight.' 'Fight! What for?' he asked. 'For our lives.' 'I have no life,' he said. Tamb' Itam heard a cry from the girl at the door. 'Who knows?' said Tamb' Itam. 'By audacity and cunning we may even escape. There is much fear in men's hearts too.' He went out, thinking vaguely of boats and of open sea, leaving Jim and the girl together.

"I haven't the heart to set down here such glimpses as she had given me of the hour or more she has passed in there wrestling with him for the possession of her happiness. Whether he had any hope—what he expected, what he imagined—it is impossible to say. He was inflexible, and with the growing loneliness of his obstinacy his spirit seemed to rise above the ruins of his existence. She cried 'Fight!' into his ears. She did not understand. There was nothing to fight for. He was going to prove his power in another way and conquer the fatal destiny itself. He came out into the courtyard, and behind him, with streaming hair. wild of face, breathless, she staggered out and leaned on the side of the doorway. 'Open the gates,' he ordered. Afterwards turning to those of his men who were inside, he gave them leave to depart to their homes. 'For how long, Tuan?' asked one of them timidly. 'For all life,' he said, in a sombre tone.

"A hush had fallen upon the town after the outburst of wailing and lamentation that had swept over the river, like a gust of wind from the opened abode of sorrow.

But rumours flew in whispers, filling the hearts with consternation and horrible doubts. The robbers were coming back, bringing many others with them, in a great ship, and there would be no refuge in the land for any one. A sense of utter insecurity as during an earthquake pervaded the minds of men, who whispered their suspicions, looking at each other as if in the presence of some awful portent.

"The sun was sinking towards the forests when Dain Waris's body was brought into Doramin's *campong*. Four men carried it in, covered decently with a white sheet which the old mother had sent out down to the gate to meet her son on his return. They laid him at Doramin's feet, and the old man sat still for a long time, one hand on each knee, looking down. The fronds of palms swayed gently, and the foliage of fruit-trees stirred above his head. Every single man of his people was there, fully armed, when the old Nakhoda at last raised his eyes. He moved them slowly over the crowd, as if seeking for a missing face. Again his chin sank on his breast. The whispers of many men mingled with the slight rustling of the leaves.

"The Malay who had brought Tamb' Itam and the girl to Samarang was there too. 'Not so angry as many,' he said to me, but struck with a great awe and wonder at the 'suddenness of men's fate, which hangs over their heads like a cloud charged with thunder.' He told me that when Dain Waris's body was uncovered at a sign of Doramin's, he whom they often called the white lord's friend was disclosed lying unchanged with his eyelids a little open as if about to wake. Doramin leaned forward a little more, like one looking for something fallen on the ground. His eyes searched the body from its feet to its head, for the wound maybe. It was in the forehead and small; and there was no word spoken while one of the bystanders, stooping over the body, took off the silver ring from the cold stiff hand. In silence he held it up before Doramin. A murmur of dismay and horror ran through the crowd at the sight of that familiar token. The old Nakhoda stared at it, and suddenly let out one great fierce cry, deep from the chest, a roar of pain and fury, as mighty as the bellow of a wounded bull, bringing great fear into men's hearts, by the magnitude of his anger and his sorrow that could be plainly discerned without words. There was a great stillness afterwards for a space, while the body was being borne aside by four men. They laid it down under a tree, and on the instant, with one long shriek, all the women of the household began to wail together; they mourned with shrill cries; the sun was setting, and in the intervals of screamed lamentations the high sing-song voices of two old men intoning the Koran chanted alone.

"About this time Jim, leaning on a gun-carriage, looked at the river, and turned his back on the house; and the girl, in the doorway, panting as if she had run herself

to a standstill, was looking at him across the yard. Tamb' Itam stood not far from his master, waiting patiently for what might happen. All at once Jim, who seemed to be lost in quiet thought, turned to him and said, 'Time to finish this.'

"'Tuan?' said Tamb' Itam with alacrity. He did not know what his master meant, but as soon as Jim made a movement the girl started too and walked down into the open space. It seems that no one else of the people of the house was in sight. She tottered slightly, and about half-way down called out to Jim, who had apparently resumed his peaceful contemplation of the river. He turned round, setting his back against the gun. 'Will you fight?' she cried. 'There is nothing to fight for,' he said; 'nothing is lost.' Saying this he made a step towards her. 'Will you fly?' she cried again. 'There is no escape,' he said, stopping short, and she stood still also, silent, devouring him with her eyes. 'And you shall go?' she said slowly. He bent his head. 'Ah!' she exclaimed, peering at him as it were, 'you are mad or false. Do you remember the night I prayed you to go away, and you said that you could not? That it was impossible! Impossible! Do you remember you said you would never leave me? Why? I asked for no promise. You promised unasked—remember.' 'Enough, poor girl,' he said. 'I should not be worth having.'

"Tamb' Itam said that while they were talking she would laugh loud and senselessly like one under the visitation of God. His master put his hands to his head. He was fully dressed as for everyday, but without a hat. She stopped laughing suddenly. 'For the last time,' she cried menacingly, 'will you defend yourself?' 'Nothing can touch me,' he said in a last flicker of superb egoism. Tamb' Itam saw her lean forward where she stood, open her arms, and run at him swiftly. She flung herself upon his breast and clasped him round the neck.

"'Ah! but I shall hold thee thus,' she cried. . . . 'Thou art mine!'

"She sobbed violently. The sky over Patusan was blood-red, immense, streaming like an open vein. An enormous sun nestled crimson amongst the tree-tops, and the forest below had a black and forbidding face.

"Tamb' Itam tells me that on that evening the aspect of the heavens was angry and frightful. I may well believe it, for I know that on that very day a cyclone passed within sixty miles of the coast, but there was hardly more than a languid stir of the air in the place.

"Suddenly Tamb' Itam saw Jim catch her arms, trying to unclasp her hands. She hung on them with her head fallen back; her hair touched the ground. 'Come here!' his master called, and Tamb' Itam helped to ease her down. It was difficult to separate her fingers. Jim, bending over her, looked long at her face, and all at once ran to the landing-stage. Tamb' Itam followed

him, but turning his head, he saw that she had struggled up to her feet. She ran after them a few steps, then fell down heavily on her knees. 'Tuan! Tuan!' called Tamb' Itam, 'look back;' but Jim was already in a canoe, standing up paddle in hand. He did not look back. Tamb' Itam had just time to scramble in after him when the canoe floated clear. The girl was then on her knees, with clasped hands, at the water-gate. She remained thus for a time in a supplicating attitude before she sprang up. 'You are false!' she screamed out after Jim. 'Forgive me,' he cried. 'Never! Never!' she called back.

"Tamb' Itam took the paddle from Jim's hands, it being unseemly that he should sit while his lord paddled. When they reached the other shore his master forbade him to come any farther; but Tamb' Itam did follow him at a distance, walking up the slope to Doramin's *campong*.

"It was beginning to grow dark. Torches twinkled here and there. Those they met stood aside hastily to let Jim pass. The wailing of women came from above. The court-yard was full of armed Bugis with their followers, and of Patusan people.

"I do not know what this gathering really meant. Were these preparations for war, or for vengeance, or to repulse a threatened invasion? Many days elapsed before the people had ceased to look out, quaking, for the return of the white men with long beards and in rags, whose exact relation to their own white man they could never understand. Even for those simple minds poor Jim remains under a cloud.

"Doramin, alone, immense and desolate, sat in his arm-chair with the pair of flintlock pistols on his knees, faced by an armed throng. When Jim appeared, at somebody's exclamation, all the heads turned round together, and then the mass opened right and left, and he walked up a lane of averted glances. Whispers followed him; murmurs: 'He has worked all the evil.' 'He hath a charm.' . . . He heard them —perhaps!

"When he came up into the light of torches the wailing of the women ceased suddenly. Doramin did not lift his head, and Jim stood silent before him for a time. Then he looked to the left, and moved in that direction with measured steps. Dain Waris's mother crouched at the head of the body, and the grey dishevelled hair concealed her face. Jim came up slowly, looked at his dead friend, lifting the sheet, then dropped it without a word. Slowly he walked back.

"'He came! He came,' was running from lip to lip, making a murmur to which he moved. 'He hath taken it upon his own head,' a voice said aloud. He heard this and turned to the crowd. 'Yes. Upon my head.' A few people recoiled. Jim waited awhile before Doramin, and then said gently, 'I am come in sorrow.' He waited again. 'I am come ready and unarmed,' he repeated.

"The unwieldy old man, lowering his big forehead like

an ox under a yoke, made an effort to rise, clutching at the flintlock pistols on his knees. From his throat came gurgling, choking, inhuman sounds, and his two attendants helped him from behind. People remarked that the ring which he had dropped on his lap fell and rolled against the foot of the white man, and that poor Jim glanced down at the talisman that had opened for him the door of fame, love, and success within the wall of forests fringed with white foam, within the coast that under the western sun looks like the very stronghold of the night. Doramin, struggling to keep his feet, made with his two supporters a swaying, tottering group; his little eyes stared with an expression of mad pain, of rage, with a ferocious glitter, which the bystanders noticed, and then, while Jim stood—stiffened and with bared head in the light of torches looking him straight in the face—he clung heavily with his left arm round the neck of a bowed youth, and lifting deliberately his right, shot his son's friend through the chest.

"The crowd, which had fallen apart behind Jim as soon as Doramin had raised his hand, rushed tumultuously forward after the shot. They say that the white man sent right and left at all those faces a proud and unflinching glance. Then with his hand over his lips he fell forward, dead.

"And that's the end. He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic. Not in the wildest days of his boyish visions could he have seen the alluring shape of such an extraordinary success! For it may very well be that in the short moment of his last proud and unflinching glance, he had beheld the face of that opportunity which, like an Eastern bride, had come veiled to his side.

"But we can see him, an obscure conqueror of fame, tearing himself out of the arms of a jealous love at the sign, at the call of his exalted egoism. He goes away from a living woman to celebrate his pitiless wedding with a shadowy ideal of conduct. Is he satisfied—quite, now, I wonder? We ought to know. He is one of us—and have I not stood up once, like an evoked ghost, to answer for his eternal constancy? Was I so very wrong after all? Now, he is no more, there are days when the reality of his existence comes to me with an immense, with an overwhelming force; and yet upon my honour there are moments too when I believe him to have been only a disembodied spirit astray amongst the passions of this earth—surrendering himself faithfully to the claim of his own world of shades.

"Who knows? He is gone, inscrutable at heart, and the poor girl is leading a sort of soundless, inert life in Stein's house. Stein has aged greatly of late. He feels it himself, and says often that he is 'preparing to leave all this; preparing to leave, . . .' while he waves his hand sadly at his butterflies."

THE CINQUE PORTS.

THERE are in these islands some happy regions whose local history is a national possession. One such is the tract of land in the south-east corner of England which was engrossed by the Liberties of the Cinque Ports. The white cliffs of that littoral have been "a lure to all the hawks of Europe." All who have invaded us, and innumerable others beaten off in making the attempt, steered for this strategical shore. Setting sail from a harbour on the opposite side of the Channel, probably Boulogne, Cæsar landed in Britain, near Walmer according to most, according to others somewhere between Hythe and Pevensey. Mr Hueffer, the latest historian of the Ports, whose handsome and elaborate work[1] is the occasion of this article, inclines to Romney Marsh, and supports his opinion with sensible and most unpedantic argument. Following the Roman eagles came Hengist and Cnut. Later, the Norman landed at Pevensey, and at Hastings forced the road to the capital. Since then the Ports have been the objective of many projected invasions. It was at Boulogne, within sight of them, that Napoleon assembled his flotilla for our subjugation; and if we are to believe the sensation-mongers, France is at this moment preparing to swoop down upon them in the darkness of an opportune November night, and Boulogne, it seems, is to be fortified against the rejuvenescent might of Dover.

From their strategical importance it followed that upon the Ports was laid the burden of keeping invaders at bay. They held the shore for the Romans against piratical hordes. In turn they gave their service in men and ships to the Saxon, and to the Norman conqueror of the Saxon. For several centuries their navy was England's navy, "the medieval equivalent, the child-father, of the fleet-in-being of to-day." When they ceased to furnish a fleet for England, they still supplied her with the nucleus of one. They were self-constituted wardens of the Channel, and as such were sometimes pirates, and only sometimes police. But they always kept the nation from under a foreigner's yoke. That was their chiefest service, in reward for which they were given the privileges of self-government and untaxed trade that have stamped them with their individual character. They were, in a word, as Matthew Paris said of one of them, "clavis et repagulum totius regni" — the key and lock of the whole realm; and their annalist, accordingly, is fortunate in writing a chapter of national history.

[1] The Cinque Ports: An Historical and Descriptive Record. By Ford Madox Hueffer. With Illustrations by William Hyde. William Blackwood & Sons.

As a local chronicler (if we may be pardoned applying the term to him for a moment), Mr Hueffer is admirably equipped. He has the indispensable qualification of affection for his subject. "Ce coin du monde que j'aime d'un amour physique," he writes; and his chapter on Winchelsea, for example, bears out the fervid avowal. With affection goes knowledge. His acquaintance with the Ports and the Portsmen, their history, manners, and appearances, is intimate and varied. He sketches them in with broad and essential lines, and is critical in the use of details, as only one with easy command of his subject can be. Local and national are so indissoluble in the story of the Ports, that in their case countryside lore is a wider historical learning. Mr Hueffer, therefore, has that qualification for the larger history which is written in their chronicles. But he is not without the "proper vanities mixed with sincere veritie" which William Lambarde, an earlier topographer of the Kentish shore, frequently quoted by Mr Hueffer, looked to find in every writer of national history. It is Mr Hueffer's "vanitie" to coax himself into a lament for the ancient days, and he is too hard-headed to be very successful in it. The "front" at Hastings frets his sensitive sentiment. There are things about the "fronts" along that whole coast very trying even to those of us who cannot claim to love it *d'un amour physique*. But no man from the "Sheeres" could state with more admirable sense than does Mr Hueffer their service to the nation in ministering to the health of even the uncongenial folk in it. The Ports, as ports, being dead, on his own showing, why should he grudge us them as watering-places, which are all gain? A personal regret, indeed, would be only natural, and his description of Folkestone, for example, is very good banter; but he ought not to indulge a supercilious mood towards his own day which is mainly affected, we have observed, in certain youthful pseudo-æsthetic coteries. We gather that Mr Hueffer disapproves of our Imperial spirit. Well, the worst that could be said of it is that it is remarkably like the spirit that filled the Portsmen. Mr Hueffer is under no delusion about it. "Sturdy villains" he calls the Rye men, if we remember aright; yet his volume is a memorial to their service and worth. From such a philosopher, yearning to cultivate a wise contemplation in any Cinque Port cloister undefiled as yet by Cockney foot, we might look for a saner appreciation of his contemporaries than that contained, say, in the chapter on Dover, with its rather petulant nonsense about the "loud bangs" of 81-ton guns.

This apart, we have nothing save praise for Mr Hueffer's book. The singularly scanty literature of the Cinque Ports includes Captain Montagu Burrows' volume in the Historic Town Series, a learned and concise piece of work which it would be difficult to excel on

its own lines. But Mr Hueffer's is quite another book. It is more intimate, more individual. "I have lived within the Liberties of one or other of the Five Ports since I can remember," he writes, "and ever since I can remember the glamour of their name has been upon me." Some of the glamour is upon us as we read him. In effecting this, he is greatly aided by the many beautiful drawings of Mr William Hyde, some of them illustrations in the text, others — some fourteen — full-page photogravures. Mr Hyde also has an intimate acquaintance with the Ports, and thereby has known how to give us artistic representations of them without any sacrifice of topographical accuracy. His aim, like Mr Hueffer's own, has been to interpret the inmost character of the Ports, and to render them in their proper atmosphere. In this he has been successful throughout a wide range of effects. At one extreme the bold plate "Dover," treated with broad contrasts of light and shade, realises the strength and grandeur of that Port, commanded by the castle upon the cliff. At the other is "Rye," a poetical rendering of the picturesque medieval Town outlined with its peaceful contours against the waning day. It is not possible for us to enumerate here all the drawings in which Mr Hyde, with striking talent, gives back the spirit of his subject, but we may mention as especially successful "Winchelsea," "New Romney and Marsh," "Sandwich Flats" (in which we look across the flats to where the old town among the dunes lies shadowed under a sun setting in a stormy sky), and "Moonrise, Winchelsea Marshes" — these among the photogravures; and "Walmer Castle" and "Dymchurch and Sea-Wall" among the drawings reproduced by process. It is our pleasant duty to congratulate Mr Hyde on his large share in the production of a work to which we can give the highest praise that it is possible to give it—that it is entirely worthy of its subject.

The salient characteristics of the confederacy of the Five Ports can best be discovered in following the fortunes of its individual members. And first Hastings, Premier of the Ports, which supplied the Speaker for their Parliaments until Sir Charles Dilke's Act swept away all that was left of the medieval institution. An older Hastings —most probably more than one —lies buried in the sea. The Britons may have had a settlement here. They were dwellers on the sea-verges of thick woods, and there was wood at Hastings in their day. The forest of Andred topped Fairlight Hill. It supplied the wood for the ships which Hastings built for her services, and a portion of it at least survived in the heyday of Winchelsea's glory, which came later. The disappearance of the forest under the axe was a contributory cause of the silting up of the harbours, which was the ruin of the Ports. The main cause was the action of wind and tide which is explained by what Mr Burrows

has called "the Law of the Eastward Drift."

"In normal years" (so Mr Hueffer describes it) "the prevailing winds of this district, the strongest winds, are those that blow from the south-west. One may see it in the growth of the trees, in the inclination of the herbage. Acting on the waters on the narrow seas, this sequence of winds causes the tides setting from west to east to be swifter, more potent as bearers of flotsam and jetsam, than those which set from east to west. Thus the sands and shingles of the sea-bottom are carried up and strewn along the coast by the rising tides, but are little affected by the retiring waves. Selecting some shallow on the shore or in the offing of a bay, the sea casts its shingle on it, in its lea. This mass forms a breakwater in whose eastern shelter the shingle proceeds to collect until it stretches in a long line from east to west, forming a beach right across the mouth of the bay. . . . Where a river exists behind this beach barrier, an opening gives its waters exit for just so long as the waters of the stream have power to scour a channel and to keep the bar from forming an unbreakable barrier. When the river no longer has this power, the alluvial soil that it brings down helps to close up the exit, to form more or less dry land behind the bank of shingle. When the old river mouth is no longer practicable, the river changes its course, and breaks an opening for itself at some other point in the shore of the bay."

Such is the law of the eastward drift which, in the play of check and countercheck, has remodelled the contours of that coast, thrown out the nose of Dungeness into the Channel, and left the ancient Port of Sandwich a little town in the midst of golf-links. All the Ports suffered from it. Dover, which appears to be an exception, in reality furnishes the most striking illustration of its power, because of the large draft made on the national money for the maintenance of a harbour there. The first of the Ports to decline was Hastings, though Hastings never lost the Premiership which was acknowledged hers under the Normans, — not even when Dover challenged it only the other day. Hastings was the Norman member of the Confederacy. She flourished in the light of the Conqueror's smile. The other Ports, to their advantage in the main, came under the ecclesiastic tutelage of Canterbury; she, less happily, under the lordship of the Abbots of Fécamp. Indeed there had been close ties between the men of Hastings and the towns of the Seine in early Saxon times, and Mr Hueffer tells us that there exists a rather amusing correspondence, under date 1855, between the mayor of Saint Valery sur Somme, the little Norman town from which the Conqueror set sail for England, and the mayor of Hastings about the reopening of the old commercial intercourse!

As Hastings declined, Winchelsea and Rye, one after the other, increased in importance. These were not of the Five Ports (which were Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Sandwich, and Dover), but only "Antient Towns." It is one opinion that by that name was meant that they were the oldest of the Cinque Ports; another is, that they were as old as they, but not of them. The latter, with the addition that they were included in the federation by Edward I., is perhaps the most generally accepted theory; but

there seems to be grounds for believing that charters earlier than Edward's day gave Rye, at least, the privileges of the happy estate. The origin of the Cinque Ports is a subject on which there is mickle din of argument and little 'oo of evidence. How far was the confederacy an issue of the older government of the *Comes littoris Saxonici?* Or was it not Roman at all, but a somewhat approximate institution arising out of similar needs; or at most an imitation in some degree of the more ancient precedent? Mr Hueffer sets out the various arguments clearly and fairly in an interesting appendix. Sufficient to say that he himself inclines to the Edward I. solution, which, it appears, he had arrived at before reading Mr Round, and holds in spite of its almost involving acceptance of Mr Round's views that the customals of the individual Ports were at least strongly modified by clauses borrowed from the communes of Picardy. And on this point he makes this interesting observation:—

"It may be worth calling to mind that a very exact parallel to the organisation of the Ports long existed on the southern borders of Russia, and still exists along the Central Asiatic roads to Siberia. I refer to the settlements of Cossacks — settlements which were and are strictly communistic in the modern acceptation of the word. *Mutatis mutandis*, their general characteristics of organisation seem to me to be considerably closer in resemblance to the organisation of the Ports than was that of the communes of Picardy. Stated in brief, their duties were: to protect the borders, occasionally of Poland, but generally of Great Russia, against the invasions of freebooters; for this purpose they were bound to find a stated number of horses and accoutrements, these horses, &c., in times of peace being used for the purposes of the community. In return they were (and are in so far as the oath of a Czar secures it them) accorded absolute self-government and definite trading and territorial rights. Now I must, of course, not be regarded as wishing to imply that the Ports derived their organisation from the Cossacks of the Ural, or the Cossacks from the Ports. But I wish to emphasise the fact that the general evolution of the Ports was so simple and so severely logical that it is not absolutely necessary to go for a parallel to a land where they may or may not manage things better."

Winchelsea, at any rate, was Edward I.'s town, planned and built by him; and how excellently planned and built we are to realise, says Mr Hueffer, on learning that to-day Winchelsea and London are the two only unreformed corporations in the kingdom. We do not take his point, quite; but at least it is interesting to know that Winchelsea elects its mayor, barons, and jurats in solemn secrecy on Whit-Monday, and not on the 9th of November. So that "Little London" (as Elizabeth gibingly named it) is even less a reformed corporation than London the great. The foundation of Rye, again, is "wrop in mystery." We note one suggestion—that the rock on which it is built was originally a net-drying station — merely in order to glance at the connection of Yarmouth with the Cinque Ports. The portsmen, in the van of our fishermen as of our navigators,—they were incomparable foul-weather seamen,—early followed the herring shoals off the East Anglian

coast, and they found a place for drying their nets suitably on the shingle and mud banks at the mouth of the Yare. In course of time they had established a flourishing Michaelmas fishery fair there, and out of this fair sprang the notorious "Yarmouth feud." For the city of Yarmouth, which had grown up around the fishermen's huts, and had been given a charter and incorporated, disputed the merely prescriptive rights claimed by the barons of the Ports. The portsmen were ugly customers to tackle on such a point, the Yarmouth men were "siccar," and so there waged for a century or two a feud, bloody after the manner of these days, which all the tact of various kings could not patch up. It was the clearest sign of the decline of the Ports when, in the middle of the seventeenth century, they abandoned the Yarmouth fair where for some hundreds of years they had entertained men of all countries.

But to return to the "Antient Towns." Mr Hueffer is nowhere so good as in his descriptions of the Ports,—their appearances to the eye, always supposing the eye in question to have artistic perceptiveness. Let us reproduce here, therefore, from among the many pen-pictures that adorn the volume, two of Winchelsea and of Rye, the one the model, the other the typical, medieval town:—

"I know of no place more prodigal of pleasant impressions than this old town, which offers itself so open to the sky upon its little hill. Consider it beneath a summer sun and it recalls the May-day riot of colour and bright laughter of a medieval township. Under a grey sky it will make you ponder on the cracks and crannies of the castles of the old time before us. Here the Georgian, Elizabethan, and the Early English crumble into one harmony of grey and red and russet.

"Go out from the place, down the sea hill, and looking back from the marsh you will see the Antient Town from its most striking side. A steep road that once led up from the quays ascends to the Strand Gate. This road cuts diagonally (*cater* is the local word) the green girdle of hill on which the town stands. On the far left there is a mass of green leafage; then a low grey wall, a grey, red-roofed house with its garden cutting up the side of the hill; then the majestic old gate itself—a grey patch, picked out with the green tracery of climbing plants; then a fretted, peaked, and gabled red line of roofs, dominating a profusion of foliage. This—with a gay blue sky above and the sunlight bringing out the red of the roofs—is the Winchelsea that forms the background of Millais's picture of the 'Blind Girl.'

"Edward I. arbitrarily laid out the streets in right angles and placed the houses in blocks of two and a half acres each. The plan sounds unpromisingly transatlantic, but, as a matter of fact, those cunning medieval builders knew how to render it spectacularly excellent. To such an extent is this the case that, although at present, save for the Court Hall and the church, not one of all the old buildings now remains, the impression made by houses that at oldest are comparatively modern is incomparably more medieval than that made by many much older towns. This is perhaps because the old lines of the streets have been adhered to. They run north and south and east and west, not too rigidly straight, either as regards their faces or their roofs. It is possible that when Edward's chancellor, the great Bishop of Ely, ruled those straight lines on his plan, he did not foresee that he was giving scope for effects of light and shade for us to admire centuries after his uncompromising pen had drawn its last stroke. Yet even now at sunset the sun shoots level rays right down

the streets and along the faces of the houses as it does nowhere else. The shadows have a peculiar liquid effect, the moisture of the evening mists seeming to split the light up and shower it about even in the deep shade that the town casts out on to the marshes seawards."

And Rye — Rye to which Thackeray sent Denis Duval to school:—

"Rye has a number of mists to come to the aid of its picturesqueness. I remember one day seeing the town on a hot summer's morning when the mists swirled all round the base of the hill. The roofs of the higher houses and the whole of the church stood up over a purple cloud. The sort of thing has been described time and again by writers who concern themselves with mountainous foreign districts; indeed I have often enough myself seen similar sights, but never anything so clear, so red and blue and purple and golden, so sparkling and toy-like. . . ."

On the central Ports, Romney and Hythe, Mr Hueffer has written one of the most interesting chapters in his book—perhaps the most interesting. Romney itself is not particularly notable. It cannot lay claim to the greatest of antiquities, so far as foundation goes. Nor was it, like Dover and Rye, a national port of embarkation for the Continent and for pilgrimages, or possessed of an international trade, though its trade was far from inconsiderable. What Romney was, it was by virtue of being the port of the Marsh. The Marsh, at the time of Cæsar's landing, must have been a fine and well-sheltered harbour. The eastward drift was at work, and the Romans aided it, working for the reclamation of lands and not for the preservation of harbours. Whether therein they showed themselves the "careful and provident people" Sir Thomas Browne found them in this very connection, is another matter. The Christ Church monks persevered with the "innings" of the marsh lands, whereupon the silting up of the harbour proceeded with greater speed. Mr Hueffer makes it clear that the marshmen owed much to Christ Church rule. He makes it quite clear, also, that their staple industry was smuggling. To the introduction of wealth by its means he attributes the fine Georgian houses throughout the Marsh, and the comparative flourishing of towns like Romney and, more especially, Lydd. Of the owlers, traders, and later contrabandists — sturdy villains indeed! — he draws a stirring picture, which has a pendant in his sympathetic sketch of the more placid peasantry that in the neighbourhood of Romney and Hythe form the mass of the descendants of the Portsmen.

In writing of Hythe, the author touches more particularly on the interesting subject of the courts and customals of the Ports. The confederacy embraced, besides the Five Ports and two Antient Towns, eight corporate members and a score of non-corporate. Some of these corporate members were important places, — Deal and Faversham, for example,—while many of the non-corporate have long ago entirely vanished. The old Court of Shepway, which gave the law for the whole body,

became gradually a Court of Appeal, presided over by the Lord Warden, who in time came to be himself the Court, sitting in Dover. As Shepway changed in character, concerning itself with foreign relations chiefly, the assembly of Brodhull assumed the adminstration of internal matters, and determined the cess and service of ships to be imposed upon the different Ports. But the constitution and evolution of the courts opens up a wide and interesting inquiry, which our space will not allow us to enter upon.

Still less will it permit of our following the fortunes of Dover and Sandwich, with their "tremendous" historic associations, as Mr Hueffer rightly calls them; or of quoting more adequately his impressionist description of the silent town among the sandhills:—

"Then, again, the sense of orientation of Sandwich seems to be totally undeveloped. The streets of an ordinary English town are moderately crooked; those of Sandwich are warped beyond conception—warped into elbows, into knees, warped till the house-fronts bulge out overhead. One sets out to find something—a church, or an inn at which last year one lodged—but one first finds everything else in the town. Or again, one wishes to make a conscientious tour of the town—to traverse all its streets. One sets out, and is for ever running against the doorstep from which one started. It is a looking-glass town, in short. One masters its eccentricities at last, just as did Alice in her case, and one spends pleasant enough hours of exploration. One passes little houses—nearly all the houses are little—whose gardens have trellised gates, affording glimpses of garden mysteries beyond. Their fruit-trees have airs, take the lines of those one sees in the gardens of foreign inns; children peep through the gate-bars as if through convent grilles. Or, through the doorways one sees windows beyond, little square windows with muslin curtains. Little old women stand in the doorways, or by the windows—little old women who ought to be coiffed in white linen. . . .

"The uniqueness of Sandwich is itself alone. It seems to be a town in hiding—a town that would gladly be forgotten, gladly be left to itself. When one thinks of its former splendour—when Jamshyd gloried and drank deep—one understands this well enough. The poor town has a soul—a proud soul of the sort that causes a faded member of the *haute noblesse* to hide for ever within doors. Thus Sandwich cowers down, hardly visible, amid its marshes; does not flaunt itself on a hill-top as do Rye or Winchelsea. It has nothing to be ashamed of—the poor town, no need to hide itself, but one feels as one passes it by somewhat of the sympathetic thrill that moves one when through the high-barred gates of his chateau one sees the impoverished Monsieur de So-and-so wandering about a faded *jardin anglais*. They wait, Monsieur le Vidame and the old Port, wait for something—for that something for which we are all waiting—for that revolution of the wheel that may never come."

This is excellently well done. It realises the tragic pathos of Sandwich which must appeal to all of us, must appeal (*pace* Mr Hueffer) even to the mere golfer in us; just as many a contemned Cockney, on the beach at Deal, looking over the Goodwins, sees a goodly fleet of fighting ships shake their sails down Channel. For Mr Hueffer cannot persuade us that to expect visions from even a stockbroker must necessarily be to "look for whales in the Euxine Sea."

THE RIVAL "FOREIGN DEVILS."

MR BRODRICK recently declared in the House of Commons that "our commercial interests in China far exceed those of all other nations put together." This statement cannot be disputed as a simple arithmetical fact, even by angry Anglophobists, who, on the one man one vote principle, claim that every European Power, however small their shred of interest in the Far East, shall each exercise an equal influence in the fate of an empire which comprises one-fourth of the population of the world. But only those who have had personal experience of Anglo-Chinese settlements are fully aware how far Mr Brodrick has understated his case; and that the whole tone and tenor, as well as the material power, of English commerce absolutely swamp those of any other nation. In other words, that England is first, and the rest nowhere.

In illustration of the foregoing I select Shanghai, only because our interests are there more strongly focussed than in other treaty ports, such as Amoy, Swatow, Kiuchiang, or Hankow.

It is important to remember that the native cities proper, however large, are separated by the sharpest lines of demarcation from the European settlements, however small. On first sallying forth into the English quarter at Shanghai, we seemed to have lighted on a collection of small palaces. No alternation of houses and hovels, of neatness and filth, of luxury and squalor, characteristic of most European towns. The private residences, the public banks, the wholesale warehouses, and even the retail shops, were roomy, substantial stone edifices, almost handsomely decorated externally, and luxuriously fitted up internally. Along the whole frontage a broad parade called the Bund, with a beautiful expanse of turf, sloped down to the Hwangpoo river — the great highway where commercial activity is at its highest. Chinese junks and sampans — mainly connected with English *hongs* — were fussing to and fro in every direction; European ocean steamers — of which the overwhelming majority were English — were loading or discharging freights of the richest and most varied merchandise. The broad, well-paved streets were as busy as an ant-heap. Innumerable rickshas carrying English employees dashed through the thoroughfares; innumerable English agents were superintending the storage of goods; innumerable pairs of coolies under English supervision, with back-breaking burdens suspended between bamboo poles, shuffled eagerly along to the measure of absurd, loud, rhythmical groans; innumerable chit-carriers were

hurriedly conveying notes to their English masters. When we extended our investigations to the outside territories of our tiny republic, we found ourselves in the Chinese section, where a vast number of natives had disassociated themselves from the capital city, and, rejoicingly submitting to English taxation and rule, had established themselves under the ægis of our protection. Some had sought that security of person and property for which they vainly sought elsewhere; some hoped to escape from the spite and tyranny of their mandarins; and others were women, who may be reckoned by thousands, and concerning whom the least said the better. Yet these immigrants, under such unfavourable circumstances, were, on the whole, orderly and law-abiding: our most rigorous punishments were regarded by them as the acme of humanity and justice compared to the tyrannical ferocity of Chinese administration. When I attended a sitting of the mixed court of justice, I noticed that whatever the sentence passed on a Chinese malefactor, the culprits invariably evinced signs of mixed surprise and exhilaration at the unexpected mildness of the award. Under the restrictions of the Anglo-Shanghai Board of Works, even the poorer native streets contrasted favourably with the back-slums of Bethnal Green, and in general aspect they were superior to the widest thoroughfares in the native capitals of Canton and Foochow. The walls were, it is true, the thinnest possible shells —a 3-inch brick; but a brick shell is far superior to the normal oriental thick mud and dirt crust. Most wonderful of all, there was not a garbage-heap within nose-shot. The principal thoroughfares were a marvel to all Celestials: they were amply broad, well paved, and lighted sometimes with gas, sometimes with electric lighting, and supplemented with swinging paper-lanterns. They were patrolled, under the provisions of the British Defence Committee, by policemen in dress and appearance the very dittoes of the London Cerberus.

The presence in the flesh of the master minds which govern this enormous joint community was singularly rare. Europeans here are, in numbers, but as a few salmon in a river teeming with myriads of minnows; but the tangible evidences of them were innumerable, and every feature bespoke them of Saxon nationality, from the lamp-posts and red pillar-posts to the ubiquity of that extraordinary form of speech called Pidgin-English. Pidgin —the Chinese pronunciation of "business"—is not the imperfect broken jargon of foreigners, but a hybrid gibberish of our language, interspersed with numerous Chinese and Portuguese terms. For example, "chow" is food, and "joss" is religion. "Savvy" (Portuguese *sabe*) means to know; "can do," very well; "no can do," I am unable. The officer commanding Royal Artillery is

"No. 1 big-gun-man," and the colonel of Engineers is "No. 1 bricklayer-man." A paddle-steamer, in allusion to its visible means of propulsion, is "outside-walkee-can-see"; a screw is "inside-walkee-no-can-see." This patois has become an absolutely indispensable acquirement, for I have never yet met a Chinaman who could, or perhaps would, accurately execute an order delivered in classical English. It even forms a basis of communication between natives speaking different dialects. My Hongkong "boy" was totally unable to understand the Hankow servants in the Chinese language, but the two parties easily carried on fluent conversations in Pidgin. There is not a vestige of French, or German, or Italian Pidgin. Persons of those nationalities are compelled to transact their business with the inhabitants by English Pidgin. As for European languages proper, I seldom found them of avail in any of the numerous localities in China which I visited, saving in Portuguese Macao. This universality of the English language, corrupted though it be, is surely irrefragable evidence of the overwhelming preponderance of English influence, English interests, and English rights.

At Shanghai we had the concrete representation of our rule in a Council of nine, and its organisation was a type of the simplicity and of the practical, vigorous efficiency with which Englishmen—and Englishmen alone—are wont to administer so successfully their self-government in the Far East. It comprised a chairman, who, to all intents and purposes, was President of the Republic; a vice-chairman, and seven members who were elected annually, but were eligible for re-election. The franchise was open to every European adult rated to the extent of £100 a-year. The Council assembled in conclave once a-week, and the minutes of its proceedings were published. At the end of the financial year a sitting was held, which was freely open to the public, and on which occasion were stated the various measures, executive and financial, which had been adopted during the past year, the existing state of the Treasury, and the Budget for the next twelve months. The Council was, moreover, divided into three working committees — one for finance, one for public works, and one for watch and police.

So much for English Shanghai. Now let us examine the condition and weigh the merits of American, German, and French Shanghai. If the just extent of rights may in any degree be measured by the interests at stake, the claims of the nations in question must be admitted of infinitesimal minuteness. The small American settlement locally called Honkiew, marked out by a narrow creek, is a long straggling strip: it bore no proportion to the English area, was only half occupied, but was fairly prosperous. The business was of mushroom growth, inadequately developed, and di-

rected towards one single aim —money-making — irrespective of a sound and permanent basis of administration. Large pretentious buildings, without any features of detail, suggested commercial enterprises which might result in enormous wealth, or in wholesale bankruptcy, without any medium. The main street, ambitiously called Broadway, contained an excellent hotel and a few flourishing shops. The majority of the holders were Chinese, and had accumulated their somewhat trumpery wares in true Yankee store fashion, the principal dealer proclaiming his name as "Chop-dollar Jack"—*i.e.*, Honest John. The American concessionists had, however, tacitly recognised their dwarfdom by partly merging their administration into that of the English.

The Germans, few in numbers and unimportant in wealth, had attempted to establish the rigid bureaucracy of their Vaterland in a small poor area. Though without any recognised concession of land, they had managed to maintain their individuality, and had attained very moderate prosperity; but to measure their interests and possessions with those of England would be a parallel to measuring an acre with a pair of calipers.

French Shanghai, however, calls for more detailed notice, because of its comparatively large area, because the demands of the nation are more inflated and quarrelsome than those of any other, and because, through the failure of colonising enterprise in this region, they have furnished an interesting and instructive object-lesson of "how not to do it."

In the course of my exploration of the British settlement, I passed abstractedly over a narrow stream and bridge, and in an instant was roused into a consciousness that the scene had changed. All was languid and unenterprising. Where was the business activity, where the handsome mansions, and where the throng of populace which I had hitherto encountered? "Rue Montauban" and "Quai des Fossés" met my eyes, while "voulez-vous croire" and "sapristi" struck my ears, and I became aware that I had wandered into the spiritless, unprosperous French concession. The two settlements were side by side, with every possible identity of circumstance and equality of advantages; yet our success could scarcely be surpassed, their failure scarcely exceeded. At Shanghai they seemed unable to modify their system of administration and business, suitable in Normandy and Auvergne, to meet the altered and inexorable requirements of the Far East: they tried to introduce a fraction of France, and failed. Their rule was imperious, autocratic, and yet injudiciously paternal. Enterprise and independence were strangled; wealth and the producers of wealth drifted into another habitat, with the remarkable feature of a steady flow of the French population

from this atrophied district into the flourishing English concession.

Failure in Shanghai seems due to the innate characteristics of the French disposition. The very *sergents de ville* were absurdly fish out of water. Their legal watchword, "Il est défendu," was amusingly out of place here. The Chinese chattered and could not comprehend; the English mockingly grinned and would not obey; the officers of State looked outraged and woe-begone, but were perforce silent. These officials, addressed in their own tongue, opened the floodgates of their garrulity. They feelingly expatiated on their sensations of isolation, on their aversion to a country so dissimilar to la Belle France, and on their longings—fatal feature in a colonist—to return to the land of their fathers.

Again, at long intervals native rowdyism breaks forth into a spasmodic ebullition, which we English quell with a body of police dealing indiscriminate whacks all round. But the French, with a vast amount of turmoil, turn out all their employees with rifles — unlike ourselves, they have no volunteer corps—and fire with cruel precipitancy on the mob, thus engendering much bad blood among the European community generally.

Many years ago, a new road having been marked out to run through a joss-house, the Chinese population became turbulent. A little timely concession, even a few conciliatory words, would have calmed them down; instead of which the French rushed to arms, and, with little semblance of leadership, they charged down the street, bayoneting on their way innocent wayfarers, and finishing up with a rain of bullets.

Quitting the sombre, unprosperous-looking main thoroughfare, garden-less and Bund-less, lining the river, I struck into some squalid side-streets. Every external was suggestive of an effete provincial French town. There were few shops, and those few had scarcely any customers. Dinginess, dulness, and depression of trade reigned throughout,—half-filled stores, semi-tenanted residences, and thin traffic. In the port their ships were comparatively few in number, and their shipping business of an attenuated nature.

Notwithstanding French failure at Shanghai, where others have succeeded, involving commercial atrophy, inefficient administration, and a minimum of general interests in the destiny of the country, French politicians angrily and clamorously recently demanded, on sentimental grounds of national self-love, equal authority in the adjustment of measures with which practically they are but slightly concerned. Failing this concession, they resented the measures contemplated by the English for safeguarding not only their own property, but for protecting the lives of their own families. They professed themselves insulted by the mere proposal of landing an English

force to aid in the defence of the English settlement. If this objection be considered valid, a loafing labourer may with equal reason claim to interfere with the hard-working and successful farmer in the tillage of his own broad acres.

I have endeavoured to depict a type of English success and prosperity in the East attained within a period of little more than fifty years. I now purpose describing the Portuguese settlement at Macao —pronounced Mă-cŏw—as an instance of the failure of other Europeans, notwithstanding more favourable natural conditions, and after a possession of little less than 350 years.

We had barely steamed out of Hongkong harbour ere I realised that I was being brought into association with a population coerced by soldiers and rifles instead of being restrained by English administration and moral power. In large coasting steamers it is rightly deemed prudent to take precautions against a sudden piratical uprising of the natives on board; but in this English-owned and officered vessel, crowded with Macao Chinese rabble, the measures were appropriate for defence against a gang of desperate murderers or for the custody of a collection of raging wild beasts. An array of rifles and revolvers, bearing a printed placard "loaded," and ready for instant use, was ranged around the saloon and at the foot of the companion-ladders; small piles of cartridges were heaped up in various convenient corners, available to be snatched up at a moment's notice; while elsewhere were dispersed bayonets, swords, and handcuffs. A sentinel, holding a drawn cutlass and begirt with a belt carrying a loaded six-shooter, was anxiously staring down the gratings which shut off the coolies from the Europeans. Like an outpost sentry, watchful for his life and for the lives of his comrades, he never remitted his lookout during the entire voyage, and was ready to shout out to the passengers a warning at any symptom of gathering or conspiracy amongst the Macao natives. Barred below were about 200 of these villainous-looking fellows. When the sentry was relieved after a spell of half an hour, his successor cautiously crawled up the companion-ladder, unlocked the heavily barred grating, and slipped quickly through, in the manner of a lion-tamer escaping from the cage. Experience proves that these precautions are by no means superfluous.

After four or five hours' threading the rugged islets beautifying this vicinity, we approached Macao, which, viewed from the roadstead, is very attractive, and rather resembles a seaside watering-place in Portugal than any locality in China. Its general feature is a curved line of European buildings, bounded by a *prado* and sea-wall, and flanked by forts commanding the roadstead. There is no anchorage in the

frontage, and large vessels cannot approach the shore nearer than four miles; so we steamed round to the back of the promontory, of which a lineal mile is claimed by Portugal, and which is connected with the mainland by a 100-yards-broad isthmus, up a typically muddy Chinese creek, passed several large native junks, all armed with small antique carronades designed to beat off the dreaded and ever-present pirates, and disembarked at a fairly busy quay. There was in the settlement but one hotel which an Englishman would find preferable to a Whitechapel doss-house. It was kept by a Chinaman, and was less dirty and repugnant than under the circumstances one would have dared to hope; but the establishment was Portuguese all over—*table d'hôte*, billiard-room, furniture, prints, and ornaments represented a mixture of veneer, bad workmanship, and worse taste.

Yet even here we discerned traces of English nationality strangely ill-assorted with the surroundings. The pictures were Woodcock and Retriever, the Coronation of Queen Victoria, and the Trial of Lord Strafford.

In exploring the town, the Spain and Portugal of the other end of the world seemed to be reproduced, or rather burlesqued, under my very eyes. Here were the Rua do Sé, the Largo do Senado, and the Plaza de la Praia Grande. The walls were distempered with the pale blue, yellow, and green tints characteristic of Southern Europe, and the balconies with their jalousies were of Lisbon pattern. The marine *prado* and gardens were laid out with uncompromising rows of trees, with stucco-edged beds and walks, and with an absence of the springy turf which English gardening alone produces. The barracks and parade-ground were as ugly as is their wont nearly all the world over; but, in lieu of their accustomed vivacity, they were melancholy with a pall of listlessness, almost of lifelessness. A few sentries were lounging in batteries armed mainly with entirely obsolete guns; a few officers were hanging vacuously about their *cercle*, prostrate with their fruitless efforts to kill time. The police officials, the wayfarers, both men and women, and even the crowd of beggars with their whine, "Por l'amor de Dios, senhor," were not merely Portuguese whose home edges had been blunted by the wear and tear of a new country, climate, and conditions—they were Portuguese fresh from the Lisbon mint. As the bugle sounded the dinner-call, "The roast Jews of old Portugal," or whatever may correspond to "The roast beef of old England," an artillery officer, set free from his duties, entered into conversation with me, as a comrade, in so far that we were both gunners. His tour of service at Macao was destined to extend over two years, and he spoke of his sojourn with a depth of depression, and as a grievous calamity unre-

would be eminently useful, among a population concerning whom my China "boy" warns me, "Take care pocket. Macao man plenty tief, plenty pirate, plenty murder." The very shop inscriptions are more European than Chinese, one of incessant occurrence being "English first-class gaming-house; Caza de Fantam de prima classe," and a similar notice in Chinese. These hells were a source of much gain, and still more disrepute, to the local authorities. One which I investigated was an absurd parody of its sister hell, Monaco, with its hot and fetid atmosphere, its ostentation of honest dealing and order, and its meretricious decoration. Instead of green baize tables were brown-paper-covered planks, around which were seated stark-naked Chinese croupiers, and for heaps of gold were piles of copper "cash." Here, too, were the sullen, feverish, crowding gamblers and the pushing spectators. Baskets of coin worked by pulleys were being constantly drawn up to, or lowered down from, an opening in the upper storey—in fact, "up the spout." The favourite game, *fantam*, is childishly simple. The croupier withdraws a handful of cash from a central pile, and the players stake how many coins will remain over after the diminished pile has been divided by 4—*i.e.*, 3, 2, 1, or 0. Gambling here, as in Spain, is the national vice, and is more pernicious than opium or *samshu* (rice spirit); yet the Portuguese do not hesitate to raise a large revenue from this polluted source, the percentage of items being—

Fantam licences . . .	25·0
Immoral houses . . .	1·5
Lotteries	42·5
Taxes, customs, and other sources	31·0
	100·0

The finance system is successful enough if dollars only be regarded. The receipts are considerably in excess of the expenditure, and are pocketed by Portugal.

The 350 years' annals of Macao may be summed up in a few sentences. In 1557 a small company of Portuguese traders established themselves there by permission of the mandarins, to whom they and their successors paid for centuries a ground-rent. Gradually the settlers assumed the position of independence begotten by prosperity. In 1849 the Chinese treacherously attacked the settlement and murdered the governor, D'Amaral: reprisals were adopted, and the tribute-money was discontinued. The Chinese now stoutly deny that this little portion of their country has ever been alienated, and challenge the present occupants to produce any documents conceding it: the Portuguese found their rights on those of actual possession for 350 years, and on the repeated tacit admissions of their opponents, only varied by a few protests of official chicane. It is, however, but fair to state that in 1864 the Pekin Government refused to ratify a treaty of commerce with Portugal, by reason of the dispute respecting the Macao district.

lieved by a single ray of light, such as interest in travel, the pleasures of sport, the value of experience, or even the cheerful performance of duty. Above all, the Chinese were conspicuous for their absence save for a few chair or 'ricksha coolies. This was in very remarkable contradistinction to all English-settlement thoroughfares, at Canton and elsewhere, which were bubbling over with a seething mass of shouting, hurrying, nearly nude, yellow bodies. In Macao almost the only sign of street life was in the shape of some Portuguese loafers, an occasional English couple—Macao is the habitual honeymoon resort of Hongkong—bound on some recreative enterprise, and a few fair Saxon children, more coltish and happy than the staid, black-eyed, sallow-skinned little Portuguese. Indeed the climate is distinctly more favourable to child health than at Hongkong; for the promontory, not being similarly shut in by mountains, is cooler, and is refreshed by a constant and delightful sea-breeze.

The cathedral, large and ugly externally, and tawdrily bedizened internally, contained some striking Spanish-looking frescoes, probably not devoid of merit. The Inquisition-like priests and the mantilla-shrouded crones scowled curses at the heretic with the same hearty venom as at Lisbon.

The main point of antiquarian interest was centred in the cenotaph and garden of Camoens, Portugal's greatest poet, and the author of the 'Lusiad.' The surrounding tangled masses of palm, banyan, lychee, and bamboo foliage constituted an appropriate and charming setting to the memorial, a well-executed bust, in juxtaposition with the poet's summer-house. The lengthy inscription, which is in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and English, records the main features of his life, and adds, "A soldier undistinguished by the glory of war, he yet engaged in the struggle of genius and in poetical conflicts."

In the older and poorer parts of the town a certain number of Chinese had collected to carry on a business which, however, possessed but little leaven of the nationality of China. Judged by a European standard, the streets were dilapidated, narrow, dirty, and malodorous; though judged by a Chinese standard, the houses would be considered substantial and the thoroughfares splendid. Here, as in the other quarters, trade and traffic were somnolent, buying and selling next to nil. In fact, the Chinese were "amongst," but were not "of," the Portuguese. Contrary to the system which prevails in English settlements, the interests of the natives have not been identified with, or made to dovetail into, those of their masters, nor have their prejudices been conciliated by the concession of a special quarter with conformable enactments. Portuguese *guardas civiles* watch almost every corner with sword and pistol, and there is no admixture of the "Lokung" or Hongkong police, where they

would be eminently useful, among a population concerning whom my China "boy" warns me, "Take care pocket. Macao man plenty tief, plenty pirate, plenty murder." The very shop inscriptions are more European than Chinese, one of incessant occurrence being "English first-class gaming-house; Caza de Fantam de prima classe," and a similar notice in Chinese. These hells were a source of much gain, and still more disrepute, to the local authorities. One which I investigated was an absurd parody of its sister hell, Monaco, with its hot and fetid atmosphere, its ostentation of honest dealing and order, and its meretricious decoration. Instead of green baize tables were brown-paper-covered planks, around which were seated stark-naked Chinese croupiers, and for heaps of gold were piles of copper "cash." Here, too, were the sullen, feverish, crowding gamblers and the pushing spectators. Baskets of coin worked by pulleys were being constantly drawn up to, or lowered down from, an opening in the upper storey—in fact, "up the spout." The favourite game, *fantam*, is childishly simple. The croupier withdraws a handful of cash from a central pile, and the players stake how many coins will remain over after the diminished pile has been divided by 4—*i.e.*, 3, 2, 1, or 0. Gambling here, as in Spain, is the national vice, and is more pernicious than opium or *samshu* (rice spirit); yet the Portuguese do not hesitate to raise a large revenue from this polluted source, the percentage of items being—

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The present Portuguese administration is based on the vicious principle to which most Western nations except England have pertinaciously clung —that of military bureaucracy and home control. The governor is commander-in-chief of the troops stationed there, and exercises an equal authority over the naval force; he is head of the municipality, chief of the finance department, and Minister Plenipotentiary to China, Japan, and Siam. This centralisation has involved a pernicious absence of competition and a commercial atrophy, the trade and industries having passed chiefly into Chinese hands. The Portuguese population, which numbered little more than 4000, were to a great extent employed in subordinate civil departments, and drew pitiful incomes compared with those of their countrymen who had been wise enough to select one of the treaty ports for their field of work.

Some years ago there sprang up at Macao a trade in coolies which was suspicious because it smacked somewhat of the slave-trade; but in 1873 the English Government forbade ships carrying on this traffic to enter their ports, and shortly after it was suppressed by Portugal.

The gist of my statements is an attempt to show the intensely Portuguese nature of the settlement. It does not represent a European nucleus compelling the submission of the natives to an alien rule through the power of the intellect, and the organisation which effects a prosperous assimilation between the indigenous and the new-comers: it represents a fragment of the Iberian Peninsula bodily lifted up and planted down in uncongenial soil. It illustrates the national inaptitude for the work of colonisation. After an occupation of 350 years the Portuguese have failed to establish even a smattering of their language amongst the aborigines, with whom they are compelled, as we have already explained, to communicate through the medium of Pidgin English, while the English element alone imparts the small amount of energy and enterprise extant. It cannot be asserted that Macao is dwindling into decrepitude and extinction; but neither can it be asserted that it is in a state of vigorous growth, and this qualified verdict applied to a colony implies non-success. Much of this is due to the mother country, which appropriates to herself a large portion of the revenue, resorts to nefarious means of raising money, underpays her employees, and starves a dependency which, were its latent resources properly fostered, would render her back fourfold: for Macao in itself possesses many inherent advantages, and would prove a tempting resort but for one deficiency—vitality.

HENRY KNOLLYS,
Col. late R.A.

A BUDGET OF NEW BOOKS.

THE literary production of a general election has little charm for the serious-minded critic. There is small room in posters for what is disparagingly called "mere style"; and, if rival leaders take pains to select their epithets and to touch up their periods, the reporters are much too busy to reproduce their oratory verbatim. It is a relief, the battle being over, and the right side having won, to turn from the placard and the platform to the first-fruits of a "publishing season" which, it is to be hoped, will be ruined neither by war abroad nor by faction at home. Yet, if a general election be not fertile in pure literature, it will be allowed to be prolific in pure fiction. And, accordingly, that critic may well be forgiven who, in the ecstacy of reaction, rushes at the first book on his table which holds out a promise of solid fact.

The illustrated biography of the ex-Premier[1] from the pen of Miss Stoddart—not, by the bye, the accomplished authoress of Professor Blackie's life and daughter of the angler-poet, Tom Stoddart, but another—is, in truth, stuffed full of fact. No circumstance is too trivial or minute to escape her all-embracing net. She has gleaned—shall we say grubbed?—in the files of many newspapers to good purpose; so that we are not only made aware what the 'Eatanswill Gazette' said when Lord Rosebery did this, or the 'Chatteris Chronicle' observed when Lord Rosebery did that, but also how here his lordship spent a night with Mr Buggins, an eminent Congregationalist, and there he lunched with Alderman Huggins, a well-known Wesleyan. The cut of his trousers, the shape of his collars, the set of his black tie ("always in the same knot, though not always fastened in the middle") are punctually recorded; and you are gravely told that the diamond buttons sewn on his green velvet coat at some fancy ball were worth a small fortune. For Miss Stoddart is a hero-worshipper of the uncompromising breed. She permits herself, indeed, to murmur a faint regret that "no wise counsellor among the peers could have persuaded" her victim "to give up the dangerous recreation" of horse-racing. But, for the rest—not otherwise than Miss Lucretia Tox might have written of Mr Dombey does Miss Stoddart write of the Right Hon. the Earl of Rosebery, K.G., K.T.

Let us cull a few specimens from this chronicle of a simple and beautiful life. At twenty-three, it seems, Lord Rosebery was "a sturdy Radical." "No man was ever more indifferent

[1] The Earl of Rosebery, K.G. An Illustrated Biography. By Jane T. Stoddart. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1900.

to social distinctions, more eager to mingle with his fellows on the ground of common humanity." For Lord Rosebery demands attention not merely in respect of his "princely hospitalitee," but also, and pre-eminently, in respect of his "poloite affabilitee," as old Cos would have put it. When he went to Oxford, "already his thoughts and sympathies were with the people"; and those generous instincts were not quenched even by Christ Church, "sickly with the affectation of an intellectual superiority." We were not at the House ourselves, but we venture to repudiate on its behalf that wholly novel accusation. In any event, Lord Rosebery was so popular there that he was once drawn round Peckwater in a sedan-chair by a "band of undergraduates!" We can quite believe it. There is, in effect, no limit to his Lordship's condescension. In the tea-room of the London County Council "his social gifts were displayed to even greater advantage than in the drawing-rooms of Lansdowne House or Berkeley Square"; on a certain Sunday on which he attended Dalmeny parish church he actually "shook hands, on leaving, with two of the elders"; and he was once in the habit of dropping in at lunch-time on his tenants after a morning's shooting in the policies. On such occasions "he would bring his own sandwiches, trusting to casual hospitality for the provision of plate, knife, and fork." That is what it is to be a peer. Your mere commoner can make shift to munch his refreshment without any such *bestek*. But the crowning illustration of her hero's "eagerness to mingle with his fellows on the ground of common humanity" must be cited in Miss Stoddart's own impressive words.

> "He can live at Epsom," she informs us, "in the simple, unpretentious style that he loves, mingling on terms of frank equality with his neighbours, . . . and often in the morning travelling up to town with the city men in an ordinary first-class carriage. . . . Lord Rosebery proves his belief in the health-giving air of Surrey by sleeping as often as possible away from London. Even when kept late by some public meeting or dinner, he seldom fails to catch the last train.

An ordinary first-class carriage! Seldom fails to catch the last train! Think of it, ye minions of luxury who loll on comfortable sofas, who whirl in well-padded broughams, who reserve the selfish and solitary compartment! Think of it, and realise that in very truth one touch of nature makes the whole world kin!

But the peer is not wholly sunk in the "democraw." No, no; that would never do. "Although the public are so generously made welcome to the grounds [of Dalmeny], there are times when Lord Rosebery demands absolute seclusion." Nothing short of absolute seclusion, to be sure, on his lordship's part, would satisfy the kind of being for whom this work is intended. There is no more consummate and thorough-going snob in the world than

your blatant Radical, except his wife. We can imagine the precious couple gloating over these highly-glazed pages, and revelling in the aristocracy as it there presents itself in the moment of birth, of marriage, and of death. (Miss Stoddart is particularly great on funerals, and we are sure Mr Mould or Mr Joram would have had a kind word for her descriptions of *cortèges*, and all the rest of it.) But of any solid and lasting value it is perhaps needless to say that the work is wholly destitute. Old fallacies are repeated, such as the tale that Mid-Lothian—won by a Liberal in 1868—was under the "ascendancy" of the house of Buccleuch, and that Mr Gladstone alone could have delivered it from this imaginary bondage. The same ingenuous strain of bland adulation informs it from start to finish, and effectually precludes all attempt to deduce the lessons with which Lord Rosebery's career is pregnant. If that career hitherto has been one of futility and failure, it is because Lord Rosebery has persisted in clinging to a party and to a set of formulæ with which he is at bottom wholly out of sympathy. Had he possessed the courage to follow his better instincts and his better judgment, and to dissociate himself from Mr Gladstone's infamous attempt to break up the United Kingdom, all might have been well with him. As it was, he deliberately chose the worse part, suffered the punishment of holding office without wielding power, played the *rôle* of Balaam to the party he once nominally led, and, when a crisis arrived in the colonial affairs of his country, instantly sank to the level of a common panic-monger. Endowed with many of the choicest gifts which Providence has to bestow, he has consistently shirked responsibility; and the solitary talent which he is known for certain at the age of fifty-three to possess is the capacity for extraordinarily apt, telling, and persuasive speech. "The one thing in English political life which the public really cares about is the future of Lord Rosebery." So, according to Miss Stoddart, spoke a "distinguished London editor" not long ago. We doubt if he would reiterate his remark today. Yet, doubtless, there is a sufficiency of persons to read this rather absurd account of him with avidity, and to admire the dozen and a-half representations of his physiognomy with which it is embellished. In the second edition the full two dozen should be made up. Lord Rosebery, K.G., squirming as he peruses this illustrated biography; Lord Rosebery on learning that the presence of the Duchess of Cleveland "gives distinction to any gathering"; Lord Rosebery endeavouring to imagine what the late Duke of Buccleuch would have said to any one who proposed to write *his* "biography" in the same style,—these would be admirable subjects for the camera or the pencil. And, whatever else may be omitted, we at least should insist on having a full-page process-block of Lord Rosebery,

K.G., as he appeared on hearing of "my dear Hedworth's" defeat at Newcastle.

We have plunged so deeply into the commonplace and the actual, that a rebound into more ethereal and less prosaic regions will be an agreeable relief. And here, luckily, are Lucas Malet[1] and Mr Anstey[2] at hand to transport us into the fantastic and impossible. But the departments of that immeasurable sphere to which they respectively escort us are widely different. Lucas Malet is nothing if not serious and romantic, though her slight sketches of American society betray a lightness of touch and a dexterity of manipulation which she might profitably seek to cultivate. "Instead of which," she wastes her abilities on the vain effort to be awe-inspiring and gruesome. Her hero, Laurence Rivers, is a young Englishman, *bien vu* in the "smart set" (abominable phrase!) of the United States, and blessed with a young and lovely American wife. Recalled to England by his uncle, he falls in love with the spectre of a beautiful girl who had been the sweetheart of an ancestor of his, and whose corpse had been consigned, not to the family vault, but to an excavation in the wall of the said uncle's country house. Laurence prosecutes his suit with great ardour, but with no success, for the ghost is an eminently virtuous ghost, and not in the ordinary line of business of a *morte amoureuse*. We own to having no sympathy with the lover. For, to say nothing of his being a married man, not only was he a leader of "cotillions" (*sic*), and not only did he look "conspicuously well-groomed" in his dress clothes (we should have thought that even the fifth-rate society papers had ere now abandoned that hateful expression), but he was apparently in the habit of smoking cigarettes and drinking claret simultaneously. The book is not unworthy of him. It never achieves the desired effect. It fails to make the reader's flesh creep; nor has Lucas Malet surprised aught of the secret of Le Fanu. The cynical old uncle, who talks in stilted and pedantic periods, is a thorough failure. Virgina alone, the hero's wife, suggests flesh and blood. She is more than tolerant of the eccentric behaviour of her husband, and we should have pronounced her without hesitation to be much too good for him. A clergyman who is dragged into the book is a preposterous caricature. But he contributes to the solution of the knot by assisting to bury the spectre's remains; after which it desists from revisiting the glimpses of the electric light.

Mr Anstey's story is cast in a very different mould, though still within the domain of pure fantasy. Horace Ventimore, a young architect, purchases a

[1] The Gateless Barrier. By Lucas Malet. London: Methuen. 1900.
[2] The Brass Bottle. By F. Anstey. London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1900.

brass bottle at a sale of oriental curiosities, and upon his removing the capsule and lid there emerges, as to the fisherman of the 'Nights,' a genie or jinnee: no other, indeed, than Fakrash-el-Aamash, imprisoned centuries ago by Suleyman the Great, the son of Daood. The jinnee is desperately anxious to reward his liberator, and the plot of the story turns upon his well-meant but extremely injudicious and unseasonable efforts to do so. Horace, for example, is entertaining to dinner in his lodgings his *fiancée* and her parents. To his great annoyance, Fakrash transforms his "diggings" into a sort of oriental palace, and furnishes a banquet the principal constituents of which are mutton stewed with peaches, jujubes, and sugar, and a whole lamb fried in oil, stuffed with pounded pistachio nuts, pepper, nutmeg, and coriander seeds, and liberally besprinkled with rosewater and musk. Again, Horace is engaged to design a country-house for a city magnate, and the jinnee, to save him trouble, dumps down on the site in a single night what the infuriated magnate describes as "a cross between the palm-house at Kew and the Brighton Pavilion," with no billiard-room, not a single decent bedroom, and never a sign of drainage. In the course of furthering his benefactor's interest, Fakrash also has occasion to convert his future father-in-law into a one-eyed mule of unprepossessing appearance. But the climax is reached when, amid the enthusiastic plaudits of the populace, he brings Horace to the Guildhall to receive the freedom of the City of London. What happens on that occasion any one who has begun the book may be trusted to find out for himself. The manner in which the tangle is ultimately unravelled, and the train of events made to resume its normal and humdrum course, is not particularly well devised. But the main idea of the work affords ample scope for the most diverting situations, and Mr Anstey makes the best possible use of his opportunities. He has not written anything in better heart or in higher spirits since he presented a delighted public with Mr Bultitude. That he has an unusually thorough grasp of English idiom, the inimitable Baboo Jabberjee papers have amply demonstrated; and it is needless to say that the piquant contrast between the pompous and flowery oriental imagery of the jinnee on the one hand, and the colloquial and even slangy dialect of the young Englishman on the other, loses nothing in his hands. Assuredly a volume destined to provoke hearty laughter and to beget genuine good-humour in all its readers.

The same may be said, though with certain qualifications and a less degree of assurance, concerning the collection of pieces which Mark Twain has just published.[1] Were the worst

[1] The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg, and other Stories and Sketches. By Mark Twain. London: Chatto and Windus, 1900.

papers in the book ten times worse than they are — and it must be owned that they are nothing very great—we should not have the heart to reproach the author. For, unless we are greatly in error, the Mississippi pilot, "Tom Sawyer," and "Huckleberry Finn" form as permanent and valuable a contribution to the literature of the United States as has been made since the days of Poe. Mark Twain at his best is as good, in his own line, as any living writer of English prose. And there are many flashes of the real Mark in this volume—such, for example, as the "Esquimaux Maiden's Romance" and "Travelling with a Reformer"—gleams of the old humour, outbursts of the old daring but triumphant exaggeration, examples of the gift of vivid and "full-steam-ahead" narration. The snag on which he now seems most apt to run his vessel is that of edification. He is too fond of being didactic, of pointing morals, of drawing lessons, of teaching the old world how to conduct its affairs. Not that when he sets out with a serious purpose he is not often worth reading. His attack, for example, on Christian Science—a topic with which the readers of 'Maga' are not unacquainted — is full of good sense excellently well put; and he "rings the bell" with an unerring accuracy of aim when he insists that dollars, not mental or imaginary, but material and solid dollars, are at the bottom of this as of every other system of quackery. But the pieces prompted by *l'affaire Dreyfus*, which seems to have made a deep impression on his mind, are not in his happiest vein, and the few reflections upon English political affairs in which he indulges will not strike a Briton as particularly luminous or intelligent. All of us have our limitations; and Mark Twain, ardent patriot as he is, has an inability to put himself in the situation of a foreigner or of one who lived in another generation than the present which we must go back to the last century to match. This is doubtless far preferable to being a cosmopolitan, or a friend of every country but his own. Yet the fact remains that he is conspicuously defective in the historic sense; and one who is defective in the historic sense had best keep his views on politics to himself.

Mr Anthony Hope in his new novel[1] has been emphatically successful in dissembling his political opinions, and yet the world of politics is the world in which his characters live, move, and have their being. So delicate is his tact, so artful his convention, that while it is impossible to identify any of his personages with the real performers on the stage, or their views with the working principles of either party, he never loses touch of actuality, but presents to us a picture, a little vague it may be in outline and a little incomplete in detail, but none the less a re-

[1] Quisanté. By Anthony Hope. London: Methuen. 1900.

cognisable picture of English political life. Mr Hope has essayed many types of fiction since he gave up to mankind what was meant for the bar. But we doubt if he has written a better book since 'A Change of Air.' The atmosphere, of course, is totally different from that of his Ruritanian romances. And it is totally different, we are thankful to say, from that of another of Mr Hope's most celebrated performances. We move, it is true, among people the least of whom, if not a baronet, is at all events a landed proprietor with a large income and a long pedigree. There is a certain amount of Bobby-ing, and Billy-ing, and Jimmy-ing—not more, perhaps, than is quite legitimate. Moreover, some of the characters occasionally strive after smart repartee. But the book is laudably free from the indescribably odious tone, the tone of fifth-rate company, of absolutely impossible men and of wholly raffish women, which so commended the 'Dolly Dialogues' to the pious, half-educated, and wholly stupid Liberal as an accurate representation of those exalted circles, wherein, if intellect had its rights, he would proudly move.

The hero of the work is one Alexander Quisanté, of Portuguese and Jewish descent, who plays a conspicuous part in the political drama of his age. It would be affectation to suppose that Mr Hope had not "the younger Disraeli" in his eye when he drew this portrait. But the resemblance is purely superficial. For Quisanté is at heart a "bounder"—there is no other word for it — albeit a bounder with inspired and exalted "moments"; and the theme of the work is the ascendancy which, by sheer force of intellect and will, he is able to exercise over Lady May Gaston, supposed by her own *monde* to be a typical patrician. It is a subject which requires careful handling; but Mr Hope has triumphed over difficulties. He makes it perfectly plain and intelligible why such a woman should determine to cast in her lot with such a man. She thinks, in the first place, that she alone understands him; and, in the second place, that she alone can improve him. The latter idea turns out after the marriage to be a complete delusion. Lady May Quisanté has to undergo innumerable petty, and two serious, humiliations. She learns that her husband has won his election to the House of Commons by circulating a slander about the private character of his opponent; and she herself is compelled to lie on his behalf when a false statement made by him in a prospectus is unconsciously challenged by some one at the dinner-table. Yet her subjection to Quisanté's overmastering intellect is never seriously shaken, and even after his death she remains true to his memory, refusing to marry the man for whom her idiosyncrasy plainly marks her out.

The minor characters are, for the most part, well drawn; and the two leading persons—Quisanté and his wife—are drawn more than well. Nevertheless

we have been steadily beset by the idea that Mr Hope's would have been a better book had it been twice as long. That is the worst of the extinction of the three-volume novel. Publisher and author alike conspire to tie down its successor to some three hundred and fifty pages of not very small or close-set type. Had Mr Hope had room to extend himself, as it were, he might have made of this a really great novel. He could have filled up gaps, he could have allowed freer play to his observation and humour, he could have elaborated the portrait of his hero, which after all is a mere sketch—suggestive and powerful in its way, but not a finished picture. Had he done this he might have given us something to compare, say, with a masterpiece like 'Numa Roumestan.' Not having done so, he must be taken to have entered his genius not for the Derby but merely for some trumpery selling-plate.

Mr Merriman's method is almost the direct antithesis of Mr Hope's. Mr Hope's outline is apt to be indistinct or even blurred; Mr Merriman's is well-defined and clear to the point of angularity and stiffness. He deals in no subtle *nuances* of character or feeling: he reveals the nature of his puppets in the very moment of their introduction. Mr Hope, once more, permits himself to indulge in reflections upon life which may not be very deep, but have the air of being the offspring of protracted thought. Mr Merriman, on the contrary, brings you to your bearings with a brisk sententiousness which there is no resisting. "They strike when absolutely forced to do so; but they commit the most fatal of all administrative errors — they strike gently." "There is, it appears, an *esprit de sexe* which prevents women from giving each other away." These are a couple of his maxims, picked at random. They are neither very profound nor very original; but they are undeniable, and they savour not of the closet but of that wonderful place "the world," a knowledge of which is among the most enviable of all human possessions. Happen what may, Mr Merriman's heroines are always fair women and his heroes brave men. The former may not be always "smartly gowned," nor the latter "well-groomed." But there is no mistaking them, for they have the right stuff in them. In the work now before us[1] Mr Merriman is well up to the average which he rarely surpasses and as rarely falls below. Corsica, with its glorious scenery and its barbaric code of morals, supplies a picturesque and effective background to the action. Lory de Vasselot, the hero, is everything that a young man should be. Denise Lange is in all possible respects worthy to be his bride. For once in a way Mr Merriman varies his usual formula by allowing to Colonel Gilbert, who serves as

[1] The Isle of Unrest. By H. S. Merriman. London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1900.

the villain of the piece, a tolerable share of good qualities. But this does not sensibly interfere with the success of the story, which is eminently sound and readable. We could wish, indeed, that Mr Merriman had a little more courage and would attempt to strike out a new line. He has fallen into a palpable groove of plot and sentiment, from which it would doubtless cost him considerable pains to escape. Yet, perhaps, instead of urging him on to hitherto unattempted enterprises, we ought rather to be grateful for his achievement in the field which he has made peculiarly his own. He never essays to be "too clever by half"; his outlook upon life is sane and manly; and he is one of the few English novelists of the present day (Mr Norris is another) who write like a gentleman, and not like a prosperous grocer, a boisterous ruffian, a dyspeptic pathologist, or a dissipated snob.

Mr John Buchan in his most recent publication[1] has made a bold effort to combine the novel of Mr Hope with the novel of Mr Merriman,—the novel of thought and politics with the novel of action. We are far from saying that his endeavour has been unsuccessful; but we have no hesitation in plumping, heart and soul, for the latter, or Mr Merriman, portion of his book. We do not suppose that Mr Buchan has travelled extensively on the borders of our Indian empire, or is conversant with the wild tribes who populate that neighbourhood. We presume, on the other hand, that he is not unfamiliar with Scotland and the life of every class of its inhabitants. Yet the curious thing is that when he takes us, in company with his hero Lewis Haystoun, to the Kashmir frontier and the country of the Bada-Mawidi, he is thoroughly at home, while at the country seat of Lord Manorwater he is thoroughly ill at ease. Mr Buchan's touch appears scarcely able as yet to accommodate itself to the delicate work of depicting ordinary people living their ordinary life. He, like Mr Hope, has a contested election in his book, and the contrast between the two authors in their handling of the subject is highly instructive, apart altogether from the one or two technical blunders into which Mr Buchan tumbles through sheer inexperience. But the moment we come to stirring work, Mr Buchan is himself again; and the hundred pages or so in which Lewis Haystoun thwarts the schemes of a Russian plotter, checks single-handed the advance of an invading army, and thereby saves India at the cost of his own life, make as pretty and spirited a tale of high courage and gallant adventure as any need care to read.

Mr Buchan, we suspect, stands in need of the warning —so oft repeated, so persistently neglected — not to spur the willing steed. As it stands, his novel is emphatically above

[1] The Half-hearted. By John Buchan. London: Isbister & Co., Ltd. 1900.

the general run. But a little more care and a little more time might have enormously improved it. For one thing, certain ugly Scotticisms, like the vulgar use of "surely" for "certainly," might have been purged away. And, for another, he might have been able better to realise his characters and to present them more convincingly to the reader. We suppose, however, that it is vain to plead with any young and enthusiastic author not to over-write himself, but to consult the interests of his art as well as of his purse. Two striking instances may be adduced as telling conclusively against all such well-meant entreaties. It is very doubtful, we take it, whether Mr Crockett would have written appreciably less ill had his muse been less prolific. On the other hand, there is Mr J. M. Barrie, who has been studiously conscientious (the stage apart) in his literary work, and has never sought to reap immediate advantage at the sacrifice of good workmanship and an unimpaired imagination. He has bided his time; he has spared no pains; he has sought to entertain the public to his very best. And the result—the appalling, the damning result—is 'Tommy and Grizel'!

For 'Tommy and Grizel,'[1] let it be said at once, is a dire and dismal failure, a lamentable and grievous disappointment. It is, to be sure, like one of George Brummel's proverbial failures—something which the commonplace author might justly esteem a *chef-d'œuvre*. The hackneyed phrase of the reviewer is in this case no more than the bare truth; for indeed there go to the making of the work an amount of insight, of observation, and of sheer cleverness which would sumptuously furnish forth a dozen ordinary novels. The character of T. Sandys is in itself a triumph of pitiless sarcasm, of mordant irony, and, we make bold to add, of unflinching cynicism. His every motive is disclosed, his every sensation analysed, with a minuteness and an accuracy which the most eminent of psychological investigators might seek in vain to emulate. Tommy is the incarnation of the so-called artistic temperament,—vain as a peacock, eager to pose, fearful of responsibility, blind to the things in life which really matter. And never assuredly have the weaknesses of that temperament been more unmercifully exposed. But Grizel! How unsatisfying! How unintelligible! That Mr Barrie has lavished untold toil upon her is plain enough. Yet she persistently fails to "stimilate." The processes of her brain and of her heart are revealed with great particularity. But the touch of nature and the touch of life are wholly absent. Grizel never convinces the reader that she is really "a good sort," and that is not far from being the first and last requirement of your true heroine.

[1] Tommy and Grizel. By J. M. Barrie. London: Cassell & Co. 1900.

We can forgive Mr Barrie much. We can forgive him for resuscitating the jaded humours of Thrums, and make shift to grin at the elaborate badinage of a railway porter and his wife. We can even forgive his adoption of one of Mr Dickens's most obtrusive mannerisms—the ceaseless insistence upon some physical peculiarity attributed to the personages of the story. If we are told once that Grizel had a "crooked smile," we are told so a dozen times; and if the fact that she "rocked her arms" (a most mysterious operation, by the bye) is mentioned upon one occasion, we believe that it is mentioned upon at least thirty others. But what we cannot forgive Mr Barrie is his hero's intrigue with Lady Pippinworth. No more preposterous episode was ever fabricated by a writer of genius. It is neither more nor less than pure penny novelette, and bears the unmistakable hall-mark of the colossal Pym himself. At their very last interview Tommy addresses her as "my lady," and as "my peerless Alice"—employing the technical vocabulary of the never-ending melodrama which is doled out to innumerable customers in weekly slabs by half a hundred enterprising, if not fashionable, publishers. It is with the greatest difficulty that we can disabuse ourselves of the idea that Mr Barrie composed the whole of the Pippinworth scenes with his tongue in his cheek. He must know that he has a host of admirers possessing more zeal than discrimination. Why not "pull their legs" a little by concocting something which they will praise to the skies, and which is in truth grotesque in the highest degree? But we do not believe that such was Mr Barrie's frame of mind. Rather do we hold that he wrote these passages *bonâ fide*, —wholly unconscious of their ludicrous effect, as he was apparently unaware that 'Margaret Ogilvie' could seem to any one an outrage and a shame. Tommy ultimately gets hanged in the collar of his greatcoat while climbing a garden wall in hot chase after the slender and haughty dame who had piqued his vanity and stirred his blood. A suitable enough end for such a fellow. But with Mr Hope's new hero, Mr Buchan's new hero, and Mr Barrie's old hero (to whose performances a period has now been happily put), do we not do well to thank Mr Merriman for inviting us to take an interest in brave, sensible, and honourable men?

The artistic temperament! How much has been uttered about it! What a cloak has it been, both before and since the days of Harold Skimpole, for all manner of low and petty vices! It has another side—the side which makes the enjoyment of life its chief and absorbing study. And that characteristic is the feature which links together most of the celebrities of whom Mr Whibley discourses in his ad-

mirably fresh and bracing volume.[1] There is a unity of subject and treatment in the essays that compose it which is too often absent in similar collections. Mr Whibley is no new hand either in journalism or in literature; and he is much too shrewd, and has too keen a sense of proportion, to break a butterfly on the wheel, or to bring the ponderous machinery of moral indignation to bear upon persons who are best handled in a strain of vigorous and high-flown irony. Hence to the literal and matter-of-fact reader his attitude may be painfully bewildering. Yet the intelligent will welcome it gladly, and will recognise that, striking as Mr Whibley's work always has been, none of his previous publications has done him so much credit as the present one. Here are an unquenchable gusto, an unflagging and indomitable energy, a sustained brilliance of wit and trenchancy of diction which he has never hitherto quite attained. He has a keen scent for the salient and essential characteristics of his subjects. No really vital point escapes him, and whether he is handling Beau Nash, or Pepys, or Beckford, or Saint-Simon, he pounces with equal swiftness and certainty upon their crucial traits. The choice morsel of the volume, however, is the essay upon "Disraeli the Younger," which first saw the light in the pages of 'Maga.' Now Disraeli is far from being a simple character to read and to interpret. We believe that many people will agree with us when we say that most of the estimates of that extraordinary man strike one as singularly jejune and inadequate, even when they proceed from friendly quarters. Mr Whibley, thanks to his intimate knowledge of the age and the world in which Benjamin Disraeli embarked on his career, has succeeded in producing an infinitely more rational and coherent account of the "adventurer" than any previous writer. No aspect of his multiform activity is neglected, and Disraeli the dandy, Disraeli the satirist, and Disraeli the politician for almost the first time are seen to form a harmonious and comprehensible whole. We trust that Mr Whibley will not lose sight of so thoroughly congenial a theme; and we part from an illuminating and entertaining book with the expression of a heartfelt wish that when Lord Beaconsfield's life comes to be published (and surely it cannot much longer be delayed) its author will be found to possess some measure of the sympathy, the penetration, and the capacity for understanding which are so conspicuous in Mr Whibley's delightful paper.

[1] The Pageantry of Life. By Charles Whibley. London: Heinemann. 1900.

THE WAR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.—XI.

BY A MILITARY CONTRIBUTOR.

NEARING THE END—PERSONALITY IN WAR—WAR WITH THE CHILL OFF—THE PRISONERS' TALE—SWEEPING UP THE CRUMBS—THE ETHICS OF RUNNING AWAY—SOME MISTAKES—MARTIAL LAW—THE NEW ORDER OF FIGHTING—THE END OF PICTURESQUE BATTLES.

WHEN Lord Roberts commenced his final advance, on the 23rd August, from Pretoria against Botha and what remnants of his army were collected, the Boers were all defiance. He was to be met by men "fighting to the death," who proclaimed with unctuous patriotism that they were fighting for "the birthright of their country," and would shed "the last drop of blood" in so holy a cause;—a most honourable sentiment in the mouth of men able to carry on war, "but not," as Lord Roberts said, "one that had degenerated into operations carried on in an irregular and irresponsible manner, in very many cases by insignificant bodies of men,—operations that are ruinous to the country, and entail endless suffering on the burghers and their families."

The Boers had every advantage on their side—a mountainous country dear to their own tactics, in the midst of a people entirely friendly; while our troops were some hundreds of miles from their nearest base, the entire distance altogether hostile, continually raided, bridges broken, rails torn up, convoys burnt, and small detachments ruthlessly murdered. Yet they never had the manhood to stand up face to face when the pushing began except once, north of Dalmanutha, where our troops advanced against a carefully prepared position, crowded with guns and rifles, across an open down scattered by rough kopjes already enveloped with the flames of the burning veldt; and again at Bergendal, a few days later, when the strength of the mountain which formed a natural fortress, surrounded by a glacis of nearly a mile absolutely devoid of cover, tempted them to let the Johannesburg police, their boasted fighting men, try conclusions, — a matter soon settled by the 2nd Rifle Brigade and 1st Inniskilling Fusiliers, who advanced at the double over the last 500 yards to finish with a bayonet charge, the police awaiting them almost to the last moment—their commandant and many being killed, several captured, and a pom-pom with its mules and ammunition deserted. Everything promised so well for them, —the British weary and homesick, always looking back to that home they had left, miles away across the sea; themselves at home, their President at their elbow encouraging them to never say die; and their

tactics, home bred, which had "startled creation," assisted, as usual, by the stupidity of the "rooineks," as when two companies 1st Liverpool Regiment, advancing too far to the front and out of sight of the main body, were surrounded by the Boers, who had galloped back in a body, after the artillery had ceased, to the positions from which they had been driven during the day just as our men were crossing a hollow. The first line had advanced within 200 yards of the Boers when they opened a murderous fire, which swept them backwards into what shelter the ground offered, and from this slight cover they managed to return the fire steadily for a time, till, their ammunition giving in, those that were left of them were forced to surrender.

At the root of all military science are two fundamental principles which every soldier must master,—to know where the enemy is, and to know where he is himself. Without an intimate knowledge of these facts, drill, tactics, strategy, and the study of every book published in a red binding go for nothing. Boer farmers have taught us this: rough-and-ready civilians have held their own, with ease, against a scientific army; officers saturated with military history, crammed with the lore of centuries of warfare, have been beaten by men who never heard the name of Wellington—their only text-books nature and common-sense; to give in, tardily, only to superior numbers: their magic being always to be in touch with us—to know where we were, and where we looked like going to. Reconnaissance and scouting are the lessons to be dinned into the heads of our soldiers—not that stale stuff which is served up, per regulation, at manœuvres or across the meadow next the barrack-square, but downright honest scouting, not on the comic annual line in which "the mess Jones made of it," or "Don't you know it was Brown again?" are thought good jokes at mess that same evening.

And so it came about that their boasted "last drop of blood" was spared. These two reverses so damped their courage that General Buller was able to push his way through a most difficult country, which lent itself entirely to resolute defence as far as Lydenburg, which town was reached without much difficulty, the Boer tactics being once more frustrated by General Ian Hamilton making a flank march round their right to open the way for General Buller's infantry to thread the narrow, rock-bound valleys that lay between the mountains, and to struggle over passes as far as Spitz Kop, sending the Boers scuttling, like hunted foxes, for their earths.

A wide turning movement had once more been successful; Lord Roberts had brought home to our soldiers what common-sense could have told them from the first—to find out the weak spot in the other man and go for it without hesita-

tion. The other man, much to his credit, had detected our game as soon as the frontal attack was played out. By his rapid power of movement he rendered his flank as movable as was Mr Kruger's seat of Government, and it took us some time and many lives to conform, by extending our flanking movement still a little farther round. Flanks cannot move out for ever: to lose connection with the centre is for that vital part to fight without a flank at all. So General Ian Hamilton on the circumference, ten or twenty miles from the Boers in the middle, sent them packing, Long Toms and all, to open the way for General Buller to march through the valley of death which had been arranged for him, without the loss of a man.

General French, on our extreme right, managed by another of his wonderful rides to reach Barberton, his troopers leading their horses across the mountains in Indian file down precipitous paths, the infantry struggling on after them, to be left thirty-five miles behind at the pass leading into the valley. The practice which the men had made previously in the mountains farther west had taught them to climb slopes that in earlier days would have been thought inaccessible. The Boers were taken completely by surprise, their only opposition a little sniping. Our men rode direct to the prisoners, 32 officers and 60 men, who were released in face of the Boers looking on, completely demoralised; 100 prisoners, amongst them the landrost, and the chairman of the Free State Raad, were captured, or surrendered at once, with scores of waggons, a large sum in specie, and abundance of stores, ammunition, and rolling-stock, including forty-three locomotives, which were a welcome addition to the limited number in our possession. Supplies for three weeks for the force were found, and large quantities of cattle and sheep in the country round, besides considerable convoys, which were intercepted, showing that Barberton had been used as a depot for the supply of the Boer troops south and south-east of the place. The morning after the entry of our troops the union-jack was hoisted over the court-house and three cheers given for her Majesty,—General French pushing on his advance cavalry to Avoca, a station on the branch line, north, where he captured fifty locomotives and more rolling-stock.

After the capture of Barberton the closing scene of the war commenced. General Buller at Spitz Kop, on the left, and General French with the cavalry and an infantry division on the right, permitted the advance of the main army, in the centre, along the Delagoa Bay railway, the pressure on both their flanks compelling the Boers to relinquish the defence of the boulder-and-bush-covered country through which the line passes. On September 17 General Stephenson's brigade, moving in advance of the main army, arrived at Nelspruit, the few

Boers there offering no resistance. Three days later General Pole-Carew, the mounted infantry, and the Guards' brigade reached the junction at Kaap Muiden, the Guards marching nineteen miles, without water, through thick bush which had to be cut away to make a path across the ravines. At the station nineteen engines were captured, all damaged and many burnt, together with more than a hundred trucks of stores partially destroyed. The bridge over the Kaap river, a considerable tributary of the Crocodile, here running parallel to the line, had been blown up, and the railway points damaged. General Ian Hamilton's division had followed, one march in rear of the Guards' brigade, arriving at the junction on the 22nd inst. at the same time that General Pole-Carew with the mounted infantry reached Hector Spruit, eight miles farther west. Here traces of the Boers' wanton destructiveness came in view,—guns burst, carriages burnt and thrown into the river, bridges dynamited, station-houses and farms in smoking ruins, while acres of country were strewn with ammunition, waggons, and limbers. Amongst the guns still intact were two of the 12-pounders taken from us at Korn Spruit, four Long Toms, and others, altogether about thirteen, which had to be fished out of the river.

The destruction extended to Komati Poort, which General Pole-Carew and the Guards occupied on the 24th inst. without a shot fired, the last Boer leaving the same day. Here devastation was even more marked: hundreds of trucks, waggons, and carriages, burning or burnt, lay on all sides; thousands of tons of clothing, ammunition, forage, sugar, coffee, rice, and flour were still burning; tents were standing in the deserted camps, the furniture and goods of their Boer occupants lying everywhere about. The Selati railway, which runs north to the goldfields at Pilgrim's Rest, was blocked with engines and rolling-stock for eight miles, all of which were appropriated to the use of our troops.

Opposite, on the heights, the Portuguese flag was flying, and a force of 1500 men stationed across the river, guarding the frontier at Ressano Garcia. The Boers were beaten: their commandants had left them, Botha was sick, others had gone south to hold independent positions, many were in Lourenço Marques or in hiding on their farms. Kruger's flight had been the signal. First the mercenaries fled pell-mell; then the mounted men broke off at Hector Spruit, hoping to escape to the bush country and gain Pietersburg; more than 2000 deserted into the nearest bush; the remainder, about 3000, fell back, as the British advanced, to Komati Poort, where the Portuguese met them and pointed out the uselessness of continued resistance. The tide had turned, it was time to go over to the winning side,—the Boers were beaten and must go. So they magnanimously offered to

support them till they could send them back to their own country—a chance that 2500 of them accepted, making their way to Lourenço Marques after destroying their guns and stores, the Portuguese insisting that the bridge at Komati Poort should not be destroyed, as it would inconvenience themselves as well as the British. Kruger, who had taken refuge with the notorious Mr Pott, was removed by order of the governor to his own house, where he was kept a strict prisoner, no communication with his officials being allowed. The refugees were encamped at Ruben Point or lodged in the jail, and a shipload sent off in a German steamer which was leaving for the Continent. It was an inglorious ending to the man and his people who boasted that they would drive the British into the sea.

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With the flight of Mr Kruger the war, as such, officially ends. As Lord Roberts says in the proclamation which he caused to be printed and widely circulated in English and Dutch, his action in deserting the Boer cause should make it clear to his fellow-burghers that "it is useless for them to continue the struggle any longer. Nearly 15,000 of them are now prisoners of war, and will not be released until those now in arms against us surrender unconditionally. Their country is gradually being occupied in a permanent manner by her Majesty's forces; both the States, once their own, have been annexed in the name of her Majesty, and martial law has been established so as to place every means at my disposal to bring the war, which has degenerated into operations carried on in an irregular and irresponsible manner, to an early conclusion." No doubt the real burghers are heartily sick of fighting; the longer they continue in the field the more they abhor it. It is here that discipline steps in. With a civilian soldier to rush to arms is an invigorating thing, —there is so much nobility in strutting out, with a rifle over your shoulder, in front of a crowd of applauding citizens, who don't mean to strut—drums and trumpets are in the air—glory is in the shouting—the landscape is peopled with a flying foe;—such is war in the streets. In the field it is cold and wet—coffee, without milk or sugar, at 3 A.M., with twenty miles to go before your legs deposit you in camp, when you will dine on "bully beef" and sleep in your boots,—a day of it is bad enough; a month is worse; but a year—good heavens! we'll leave that to the soldiers who are paid to do it—and go home.

But if the burghers were sick of the war, there are two forces in the field to keep them up to it; they called up the monster when they wanted him, and now that they could do without him, he will not go. These are the foreign adventurers who looked for solid rewards for their zeal towards the Transvaal cause: penniless and homeless men who thrive on other people's troubles and have no

wish to end them; and the rebels drawn from our colonies, who have before them stern justice as their lot, when the war is over and they sneak back to their farms and British rule—men fighting with halters round their necks are not likely to urge submission.

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It was hoped that the effacement of De Wet would put an end to the annoying and constant petty raids which he had carried on in the Orange River Colony; but the opportunities to repeat them which our mistaken leniency offered were too tempting for the leading spirits at the head of the several wandering commandos to resist. Theron had turned up at Honig Spruit to capture a train loaded with stores; and Olivier, with the guns which he had abstracted from the force which surrendered to General Hunter on the Little Caledon, began to give trouble, till, growing bolder by success, he ventured to attack Winburg, when he was beaten back by General B. Hamilton, a small party of eight Queenslanders managing to capture Olivier and his sons by a clever ruse —an incident which might be expected to have considerable political, as well as military, importance in the campaign.

Olivier was the first commandant of any distinction to cross the Orange river and invade Cape Colony, where he annexed districts and towns to the South African Republic, changing Colesberg to Oliviersburg, and generally incited the colonists to rebel and join his commando. After a somewhat roving commission he formed a laager at Stormberg, which was attacked with much loss by General Gatacre. But his most remarkable feat was the masterly march from Aliwal North to Brandfort, when, encumbered by artillery, 750 waggons, and 12,000 cattle, he moved his army from the Orange river through the hilly country along the Basutoland border, till, with little or no loss, he got round the British army on his flank at Bloemfontein, which was watching for him all eyes and ears; then south again to Wepener, which he all but captured; to pierce, on his way back, the boasted cordon we had stretched, here, there, and everywhere, except where he and his waggons were travelling, and that without losing a single gun or waggon. Lord Roberts remarked that his capture was "very important, for he had been the moving spirit amongst the Boers in the south-east portion of the Orange River Colony throughout the war."

Personality is everywhere in a soldier's life. Before everything he is a man, and a very human one: man is a fighting animal; his instinct first to kill —after that to save his own skin when killing others; instinct teaches him to bunch himself with other men so as to kill the more with more security —the bravery of the soldier is much nurtured by the presence of his right- or left-hand man. The lower instincts, having gathered, look around for one higher than themselves to lead

—one that can teach them to kill better with less risk; and so it comes that this taller, finer instinct falls in their leader: reason has crept in to breed the first duty of a soldier—obedience. Boer or Briton, scraps of the same human nature, it is all the same: the instinct, born in all, to kill—cultivation shuns the vulgar verb and says to conquer — has evolved personality to lead, the rest to follow, —call it De Wet, Olivier; or, higher up the tree, Wellington, Napoleon: the personality of the man in each has gained them followers.

After this the raiding by commandoes-in-force frittered away into mere guerilla attacks on the railways, mostly south of Pretoria—the destruction done being annoying, and such that could be easily caused by half-a-dozen men with a packet of dynamite, — a mode of action which only exasperates the winning side, like the sniping of sentries or the hustling of outposts, and cannot be recognised as legitimate warfare: a fact that Lord Roberts gave voice to on the 4th September when he annexed the South African Republic, as he had annexed the Orange Free State three months previously, thus placing the burghers in both colonies on the same footing.

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The policy of kindness and conciliation which Lord Roberts extended to the Boers had lasted just long enough to prove that a war once entered on must be carried through with all its horrors undiluted; with all the attendant terrors which convince a nation that it is conquered more than do the blood and the bayonets that produce them. To us, who had been flouted with a declaration of war couched in the most offensive terms—who had seen our colony violated, its homes pillaged, and its people outraged, —there came a kind of pity for the misguided men who did it: they knew no better. In place of a corrupt government we offered them a just one, under which the equality of all men was assured: when their irritation calmed down they would recognise the blessings of an honest government, and would come in with pleasure.

But this was to look on one side of the question,—the other is the Boer side: they much prefer their own mode of government, Kruger and all; they have no dislike for dishonesty—they do not call it by any so offensive a name, it is mere slimness, the most ordinary way of earning a living; they do not want their children educated,—why should they do what they see no use for? Above all, they hate equality: a Kaffir equal to a Boer! why, the heresy of such a mode would be fatal to every white man in Africa. Last of all, there is not a Boer among them who did not think that it was his independence which was threatened,—an idea which we knew was untrue, and we believed that they thought so too: we offered what they hated and did not want, and we pitied them because they did not think as we thought. So a policy of kindness was

tried to fit the case: property to the last stick was to be held sacred, even to exasperation, when, as an eyewitness reported from Senekal, British soldiers were sent out to collect in their helmets and handkerchiefs the half-dried cow-dung off the streets wherewith to cook their rations, while the Dutch inhabitants, whose wood-stacks were in the backyard, grinned and sneered at them from the windows out of which only a short time before Major Dalbiac had been treacherously murdered.

Perhaps we should not have been so ready to extend kindness to the Boers had we seen the report on their treatment of the British prisoners of war at Pretoria. That a Boer here and there has committed a savage deed is admitted by pro-Boers, who excuse their friends as uncivilised farmers drawn from remote districts—a pretence which will not cover this case. A committee of responsible men was intrusted with the treatment of the prisoners — an Englishman, Dr Veale, an M.B. of Cambridge, acted as chief of the hospital, and Mr Kruger was personally and constantly in communication with the committee; yet "the men lay in open sheds, and the latrines were so close as to be dangerous." Meat was only issued twice a-week, and then only half a pound at a time, the result being that "the men became very weak and liable to disease, several coming to hospital simply from weakness from want of proper food." Two hospitals were granted: in one some beds were provided, in the other nothing of the sort; "when first occupied it was roofless, and men with fever lay on a blanket, with their boots for a pillow, and running water at their side." No medical comforts were provided till the end of February; "the condition of affairs was absolutely scandalous,"—the report adding, "A great responsibility for them rests on Dr Veale, who was unwilling to risk trouble with the Government and imperil his own position"—conduct which, as Lord Roberts remarks, "it would be difficult to condemn too strongly. His heartlessness in ignoring the disgraceful treatment of the sick prisoners and the remonstrances addressed to him by the medical officers in charge of them calls for the severest reprobation." Visits by ministers of religion were only permitted once a-month. The one representative of the Church of England in Pretoria, the Rev. J. Godfrey, to his everlasting shame, after the escape of Mr Churchill discontinued his ministrations, in consideration of "his duty to the Government, and on account of his desire to maintain the honour due to his position." The account is of Pandemonium, managed by savages.

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It was not till these petty raids on the railroads had multiplied, and "honest farmers" were found fighting against us with our passes in their pockets, to culminate in what Lord Roberts called a "clumsily con-

ceived plot" to carry him off to the Boer lines and to murder his officers in Pretoria, that the war flowed back into its natural course. The proclamation of conciliation was rescinded, and a new one, prescribing the most rigorous measures, was substituted. All burghers in districts occupied by our troops were to be considered as prisoners of war, and transported; all buildings where the enemy's scouts are harboured to be liable to be rased to the ground; fines to be rigorously exacted; and any Boer failing to acquaint our troops with the presence of the enemy upon his farm to be regarded as aiding him — a much-needed measure, which was at once acted on. Cordua, the instigator of the plot against Lord Roberts, was tried and executed within a few days of its discovery; large numbers of malcontents were deported; and the destruction of farms proceeded with, to the entire satisfaction of the army, who saw an indefinite postponement of the end as long as a policy was continued which was totally misunderstood.

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When we open our newspaper after breakfast we stretch our legs in front of the fire, complacently dawdling, to drag out the "sensation in large type" which we hope is awaiting us as a tonic to the day's talk,— a fight — a surrender — Ian Hamilton turning a Boer flank, or Buller rushing a kopje packed with Mausers; and are disappointed when there is nothing better than the capture of a nek, or a report from Lourenço Marques that Kruger is in bad spirits. We hoped for a battle or two, "a daring incident," and so on; the paper is dear at a penny when it tells us nothing but the pursuit of De Wet,—why don't they catch him and have done with it? If this sweeping up the crumbs at the close of a campaign is tedious to read about, how much more so must it be to the men who are sweeping? The following letter from one of them tells us how they find it—that the life of a soldier is not all battles and big drum:—

"When I joined the regiment again we trekked [walked] to Lindley, then to Heilbron, and back to Kroonstad, and round and round that piece of country after De Wet till we were perfectly sick of life. We had a certain amount of fighting, but the Boers would never stand against us: they ran away, and we had to go after them. The weather down in the Free State in June was awful: the days were all right, but the cold at night was intense. Of course we've got no tents or anything with us—we sleep on the ground always: you've no idea how sick we all are of the whole show. Finally, we got up to Krugersdorp, and we hoped to be allowed to stay there and get a week's rest or so, but we weren't, and off we went to Rustenburg. We had a small battle at Oliphant's Nek; but of course the wily Boers ran away, and we did very little damage. Up to the present time I've walked on my poor feet between 600 and 700 miles: sometimes we go on every day for a fortnight, doing about sixteen miles each day; up at 3 A.M., and sometimes not getting into camp at night till 10 or 11 P.M. I don't quite know where we are going to now; they can't let us remain still for longer than they can help, I know. I've given up all hope of seeing England again for years to come: these Boers will go on at their game till

eternity, unless we can get a little sense in our heads and treat them as they ought to be treated. There is absolutely no glory or fun attached to the proceedings, at least I haven't discovered any yet. It's fearfully hard work, and most uncomfortable, and one does it all on the off-chance of getting a hole in one's body. There have been times during the last two months when I'd have given almost anything to be able to get in the way of a bullet. You see I wasn't born to spend my days walking over this beastly country. I've had enough of warfare—at least walking: the warfare part of the business is exciting, if nothing else, but there's so very little of it."

But the longest lane has a turning, and those weary feet will rest at last. The tramping miles across the veldt, that looks so level and is not when men's legs tell their story, will pass away, the last rolling swell is beyond: not very far, on the other side, is home and rest, a pillow for the head, and a dinner of English beef instead of bully and trek ox. De Wet may still wander round, but not for long; Colonel De Lisle, of mounted infantry fame, has organised a flying column to capture him. For the rest—rebels, raiders, and foreign scum that agitate—General Baden-Powell is left in charge with 15,000 police to look after them, and hunt them from their holes. The Guards have started for England, meeting a party of Boer raiders on the way which cost them eighteen men. Following the Guards were the Naval Volunteers and C.I.V., all inspected by Lord Roberts at Pretoria, and complimented on their behaviour as good soldiers amongst soldiers. The home-going is continued by the Colonial Volunteers and by General Buller, to be followed in due course by General Roberts, — only Baden-Powell with his police, and the troops required to garrison the country till it quiets down, remain. Sir A. Milner left Cape Town for Pretoria to see for himself when he could substitute civil for martial law, the enforcing of which had laid a heavy tax on the energies of Lord Roberts; for months the will of the General had been law, published by him through proclamation and enforced by courts-martial assembled by himself.

Last, and perhaps least, of all, Mr Kruger, "feeling hopeful that all will come right" when he reaches Europe, sneaked away with his bars of gold in the Dutch cruiser Gelderland, which sailed from South Africa on the 20th October—just one year since he declared war. "He was weary of staying at Lourenço Marques so long, and the delay cut into his leave of absence;" his grandson Eloff, who accompanied him, remarking as he went that the Boers would hold out for four months more —"they have lost everything, and are fighting despairingly now." It is a sordid ending to a man and his people who might have been——

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That the Boers fought so long and bravely must excite our admiration when we put aside the white flag and other horrors. We can understand an army of volunteers starting up quick to obey the call of a leader whom they trusted, tell-

ing them their independence was threatened; that the English could only fight to be beaten—did not Jameson's raid and Majuba prove that? Other nations, looking on as friends, it was added, would step in to take their side when it was the liberty of so small a people which was threatened; and the sea had been specially created for the reception of any one that dared to invade their sacred birthright. God Himself was with them: their President said so, and he read his Bible frequently, so it must be so. But that the Boers should keep their ground for a twelvemonth against the greatest army Britain could send out seemed to be a fairy tale,—these simple farmers, without discipline, without organisation, without red-tape. As a man who went through the campaign with them tells us, their officers had no power to make them leave their tents when they were called out for fighting. A council of war decided how many were wanted for a particular service which was explained to the men, who were then asked to volunteer, when, perhaps, out of a commando of several hundred men only a tenth or one-twentieth would step out. After Spion Kop Botha called for 400 volunteers to resist an attack which was expected, yet it was with the utmost difficulty that that number could be induced to respond out of some 10,000 Boers then round Ladysmith. Sentries and outposts were represented by a "Brandwacht," or fire-guard, of about 100 volunteers, who were supposed to take up their position at a certain distance from the laager and remain there till daybreak. The duty was not compulsory, the men taking with them their blankets, pipes, and kettles, with which they made themselves comfortable. When the enemy was known to be near, the Brandwacht kept awake as a matter of personal safety: otherwise he folded his blanket round him, and, using his saddle as a pillow, slept till the sun rose. The punishment for sleeping on his post might be to carry a box of biscuits or a stone on his head, but if he declined to do it, no one could say anything to him. It is not improbable that the Boer method of doing "sentry-go" encouraged our own carelessness. When an officer puts on his shooting-coat on the "First," before starting he finds out where the birds are,—a preliminary which was many times omitted in South Africa, where the birds were Boers and carried rifles.

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About Boer courage there is no doubt, if it is called for in its natural place,—not to face a bayonet charge. We have been too prone to sneer at their reluctance to stand up before what correspondents, airing their French, call "l'arme blanche." I don't think the British farmer, out fowling, would be thought the worse of if he bolted before a boy who made at him with a gun, a bayonet at the end of it, although he had half a dozen bullets inside his own. Every

man should get his due. The Boers never said they could fight in the open—it was not their way. They had fought behind a boulder ever since they took the country from the Kaffir, and boulders are a necessity to them, just as "line or column" is to us. So long as we played the game and attacked the boulders, Boers were a match for us. It was no disparagement to their bravery that they always ran away, but they had killed a hundred or more of us and sent away their ponies and their guns first. There is one disadvantage in fighting only to run away—the running-away part of it will tell on Boer and Briton alike. A man may run once or twice, but after that he will somehow begin to look behind just to see if the other fellow is coming after him. At first it will be a glance, just enough to load his rifle; next time it will be a good look, which gives time for the other one to come up, when he will look bigger than he did at first —too big to tackle—so here's off! And, on the other side, when you know your man will run, you get a lot of pluck inside your own belt, and your spirits rise—the quicker he runs the higher they go,—till you don't think much of that man. So these two forces operating sent the Boers flying as the campaign ran out. General Buller pushed them through the mountains of Lydenburg because their spirit was broken. Our repeated successes over a very difficult country well suited to their usual tactics would not have occurred in the earlier stages of the war; but as their power of resistance has weakened, so the spirit of the men of a victorious army has increased, and positions hitherto looked at askance as unassailable were now taken as incidents in the day's work. Barrack-square soldiers are fair to look upon by the nursemaids who peep through the railings, but the bronze-cheeked men, in threadbare, who have seen "something in Africa," hold their own with conscious dignity.

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And this boasted mobility of the Boers, does it not owe something to our own cumbrous movements? That flank which, when threatened, always reinforced itself in time to meet our turning movement — was it not warned of the threat in ample time? It was a well-conceived plan to turn the Boers' right on the Tugela; and we should have turned it, and Spion Kop would not have made itself a name in history, but for those miles of waggons which sprawled, with whips and yells and noisy tumult, from Chieveley to the river. No flank, except a fool-flank, would have been taken in. But in those days warfare was deliberate. Men started off after breakfast for the day's work, tents were carried for a summer stroll. Then Lord Roberts came and we hurried up. We saw him in the saddle every morning at daybreak, with his staff, at the head of the advance; men sleeping in winter on the bare veldt, content with half-rations, often less; officers

dining on the lee-side of a boulder to protect them from the wind, the fire dried cow-dung, the joint "bully" with "quaker oats" for an *entrée*—yet they could not catch De Wet. Mobility again! No, common-sense! Every Boer with him led a spare horse; absolute necessaries were carried in Cape carts — two-wheeled vehicles which can go anywhere where wheels can go; while our men rode worked-out horses, and were tied up with ox-transport that moved something over two miles an hour. Most of the fights were rearguard actions, the object of them to allow the guns and carts to escape; so just as we had got De Wet—guns, Cape carts, and all—there came a kopje, facing us, and "strongly held." This meant a pause—a consultation, with the old processional battle to follow—advance of cavalry—preparation by artillery — infantry advance—and assault of the position just in time to see the convoy moving off for all that it was worth.

To fight a rearguard action, the man in command of the guard bluffs the other. He makes a big show, puts every man he has in front, and dares the other to come on. If he is taken in and fights the regulation battle, it takes time, and the rearguard man wins the trick. Those convoys that we saw creeping away "in a cloud of dust," just an inch or two out of range, would have missed that inch which saved them if we had neglected tactics for the moment and rushed that kopje with every man we had. De Wet's mobility would not have survived the shock.

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But there have been worse mistakes: it is a wonder that there have not been more, when there was an army of 200,000 men to commit them, — men dragged out of every corner of the land in a hurry, and thrown together; many of the Generals unknown men, who had never seen their commands before or the Staff who were allotted to them at the eleventh hour,—strangers to them and to their own work; regiments brigaded together that did not know each other's name; and all of them to be brought, suddenly, face to face with a strange kind of fighting that kicked over all the military traditions that ever existed. Still, things might have gone better: it is the hard-and-fast system our soldiers are bound to that throttles them. Lord Wolseley says: "I would above all things wish to impress on the rising race of General and Staff officers the absolute necessity, in all small wars, of suiting not only our tactics, but, in the first instance, the organisation of the force to be employed, to the nature of the work to be done, and of the enemy to be encountered." Yet when a small war, as it was then thought, against the Boers broke out, he despatched army corps which were designed to meet a highly civilised nation on a European battlefield. "Unmounted men preferred" is an expression that describes the system, cast-iron in its rigidity. This system under

Lord Wolseley became educational. Officers who should be with their men attended classes instead, which turned them out rather "superior persons," so crammed with red books as not to leave a cranny for common-sense. A hint to them from any one was not wanted,—there was no room to stow it. It is to this sense of superiority that our first mistake—to undervalue the other side — was due; a mistake fatal to success in military life. The Rifles climbed Talana, and we became hysterical in our congratulations. It was all over,—we told you so,—the Boers will never stand! It would have been wiser to wait before we ventured an opinion on Boer courage. A little cool science then would have been very useful against untrained farmers. When Lord Roberts put it to the front those untrained farmers had become trained veterans.

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Lord Roberts and many of his subordinates have been much hindered by the want of an efficient Staff with which they had been accustomed to work. Lord Kitchener, as Chief of the Staff, was an excellent officer when he was in his place, at Lord Roberts's elbow, to grasp every wire between his chief and his subordinates,—one head would have mastered what a dozen failed to do. But he had to be here, there, and everywhere: we heard of him starting up, quite unexpectedly, at the most out-of-the-way corners, to do, or to stop somebody else from doing, something. "Brass hats" are not popular with the men to whom they carry orders, which is their duty before all else,—so much depends on the manner of the man who delivers them. It may be abrupt or peremptory, as if it emanated from himself, when he will put the other man's back up; the order will not be obeyed cheerfully, and mistakes may follow. Or it may be courteous, a pleasure to receive and to carry out: it will be obeyed to the letter, and mistakes will be rare. It were better if the education for the Staff included a lesson in courtesy in exchange for statistics of battles that were fought fifty years ago.

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Over-confidence, bred of the sense of our undoubted superiority to Boer farmers, was the cause of many bad mistakes—Colenso, Korn Spruit, Reddersburg, and others. Yet, if we had not been so haughty with the colonists who had lived side by side with the Boers for a lifetime, they would have told us that there are no men so crafty or so 'cute. It was the independent intelligence of each man that was the Boer advantage—one that is impossible in a regular army the existence of which depends on the "chain of responsibility" being preserved intact from the Commander-in-Chief to the drummer boy. So long as the Boers were held together by the first excitement of fighting a battle, and that a winning one, all went well with them—it was a pleasant picnic. They turned up when they liked, strolled out for a day's shooting "rooineks,"

with sandwiches and water-bottle, and came back when they liked for a good night's sleep. But after they had fought on for months they found the work tiresome. When the battle became a continual run, when sandwiches were scarce, and the "rooineks" shot back a little too well, it was all over with individual intelligence, except when it could teach its possessor how best he could get away. Discipline was needed, which means one head, the rest to follow. So they broke up and vanished.

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The return to civil law, in a country where it has been suspended in favour of martial law, which lawyers describe as no law at all, is a delicate matter to decide. Martial law, in war, is a necessity, but is not the less distasteful to the officers who have to administer it. An obligation which accompanies the command of men is the administration of law for the punishment of offenders — always an unpleasant duty with a soldier, whether he is the colonel in the orderly-room, with powers limited to something over a fortnight's imprisonment; a court-martial without any limits to its powers at all; or the latest-joined subaltern, who hesitatingly bleats out his maximum, "3 days to barracks." Punishment means "crime," in a soldier's sense of the word, and there is no officer who cares to be reminded that such an inconvenient thing exists in his command. But "crimes" will be there,—serious ones, perhaps, but always those of minor importance — absence, drunkenness, insubordination—to deal with which military law is ample. Civil law can deal exhaustively with crimes, great or small, whether committed by soldiers or civilians, as long as the earth revolves round the sun, as it did when laws were made. It is just when the world gets out of gear, and, for a time, murder and every other crime, abhorrent so long as its revolutions continued with regularity, are looked upon as legitimate, that civil law falls through. And just now in South Africa this state of things prevails. A war has poked itself under the wheels of the coach, and law and order, which are its ordinary passengers, are upset. It is here that martial law steps in. In war, time is everything: swift justice must be dealt out, sharply, quickly. It is not the amount of punishment that deters,—it is the certainty and the celerity of it. Civil law is proverbial for its delays: there is no better instance than the trials of rebels at Kimberley after the siege, when we saw men steeped in treason, more often than not half-admitted, yet walking out of court, untouched, smiling at the legal quibbles of their attorney to which they owed their deliverance.

Law has no place in war: that baneful thing has extinguished it, as it extinguishes most of the better side of human nature. War, like necessity, has no law, except martial law, the will of the conqueror—the only law that can be enforced. Though the

war in South Africa is over, murder, rapine, treachery, and all sorts of evil still bubble up from the Boers, "fighting despairingly"; their tempers simmering, only just off the boil; the weapons with which they stirred the fire still in their hands, the will to use them still in their hearts. Sir Alfred Milner has gone to Pretoria to judge for himself whether the time has come for a return to civil law,—a mission which has all our sympathies, though we know that the sharpest knife gives the least pain.

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To the Boers belongs the credit of teaching the world the new order of fighting; and it is to the painters of battle-scenes that the lessons they have taught us will particularly apply, for there will be no picture possible. Those brilliant scarlet or white uniforms that gave such colour to the scene have vanished. If the artist is provided with a telescope, he will just get in some khaki specks a mile or more away. The smoke that lent an atmosphere of mystery to the stern-faced groups surging across the foreground, half hidden by it, is gone. The battery and the gunners—they wore blue then to tone down too much red—must be put in in black, a dot against the sky. Those cloud-bursts overhead, marking the shells that burst, where are they now? Even the poetry of that bayonet-clutching line has been wiped out by the prose of "magazine fire." "Up, Guards, and at them!" can never come again. Battles will be fought by invisible enemies with invisible weapons. Picturesque battles are no more!

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And now, nothing but the recollection remains with us of victories bravely won; of mistakes bravely met; of weary days and wearier nights; of the veldt when the sun blazed or the frost fell, and over it always the tramp of British soldiers, ill-fed, ill-clothed, always in face of sudden death; and, beneath, that silent throng to whom came peace before all the rest,—soldiers all of them, brave to suffer everything, so that they might do their duty.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE PROCESS OF ELECTION—THE FOLLY OF CANVASSING—THE VANITY OF THE ENLIGHTENED CITIZEN—THE HUMOURS OF THE CONTEST—THE LIMITATIONS OF DEMOCRACY—THE HAPPY FAILURE OF REFORM—DEMOCRATIC LITERATURE—HOW TO WRITE FOR THE MAGAZINES—INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUNG AUTHORS—T. E. B., POET AND LETTER-WRITER.

ONCE in seven years, or oftener, the rulers of our country take the great democracy into their confidence. They desire what is called the mandate of the people; without a smile they declare that they will proceed upon their business in a spirit of easier confidence if supported by the free and enlightened electors; and they visit the constituencies with the determined air of soldiers who will not show fear, even at the cannon's mouth. Of course they mean no more than that seven years of office are convenient for themselves and for the country, but their attitude and speech alike suggest the lust of battle. The meanest candidate that ever sought the suffrages of the electors wears upon his head the helmet of glory, and the constant recurrence of such phrases as "fought the good fight," "desperate struggle," "brilliant victory," clearly indicates that the road to Westminster is thick with the bodies of dead heroes.

But battle though it be, it is generally bloodless, and the candidate grows into a member without wounding anything more serious than his sense of humour or his love of truth. It is an accepted tragedy that the people must be flattered and cajoled, and the parliamentary candidate commonly arrives upon the scene of action with his mouth full of promises and compliments. How else should he make himself acceptable? More often than not he is a stranger among strangers, knowing no more of his constituents' opinions than they know of his. But what Mr Ellis would call "a stream of literature" soon overflows the borough, and red and blue are busy demonstrating each other's crimes and their own virtues. When the free, impartial democracy condescends to silence, the candidates explain their views from the platform; but the true-born Radical has a noble hatred of free speech, and he generally prefers a lusty roar to political exposition. The real work of catching votes, therefore, is performed by an ingenious process called canvassing, and he who has never canvassed cannot understand the splendid farce of the British democracy.

The dictionary tells us that "to canvass" means to toss in a sheet, and we are willing to put implicit faith in the dictionary. From tossing in a sheet to moral agitation is but a step, and moral agitation perfectly

defines the act of canvassing. As the process seems humiliating to the canvassers, so it should seem impertinent to the canvassed. But he who believes that is wofully misled. If a stranger called upon us, and asked our opinion of the Boer war, we should firmly and politely show him the door. If he dared to ask for whom we meant to cast our vote, we should refer loftily to the secrecy of the ballot, and make it quite clear that an outrage had been committed upon our cherished principles. But the bold democrat is not of our mind. Once in seven years he likes to indulge his vanity. For one month at least he is an important personage, and he means to vindicate his importance as savagely as he can before he resumes the baser pursuits of life. The servant, in fact, suddenly becomes the master, and since bribery has been suppressed by an unimaginative Act of Parliament, the servant is free to take out his mastery in a contemptuous patronage. He will heckle the candidate with the calm assurance that the candidate is merely there to be heckled. He will welcome all the canvassers into his house, because each fresh-comer increases his dignity. He will resent nothing save neglect. He must be visited, his vote must be demanded, or he won't give it at all. And even though he believed the country in peril, he would vote blue against his conscience if the blues had shown him a more pertinacious attention than the reds. Let this, then, be remembered as the essence of practical politics: the vanity of the voter. Opinions are nothing, speeches are nothing, leaflets are nothing. But the voter must have his hand shaken. We have recently assisted at what is called a "desperate struggle," and we soon realised that a personal visit was the deadliest weapon that we could employ against our adversaries. Some electors, of course, will let you down easier than others. A few will be content to see a second cousin of the candidate. But the most will be put off by no substitute. "I ain't seen your friend," said one free and enlightened elector, "and I ain't goin' to vote for a man as won't shake me by the 'and." That is what patriotism means to thousands of our countrymen, and it is well that candidates should learn early that a British borough is not Utopia.

But there are other frivolous motives which control the voter besides the snobbery we have described. Many hundreds of citizens vote blue or red because they have always voted blue or red. "It's no use talking to my 'usbing," said a woman to us, "you can't move 'im. It's the same with elections as it is with the boat-race. Dark blue 'e's always been, and dark blue 'e'll always be." Against that profound reasoning argument is hopeless: the free voter must be left to support the colour he prefers, whether the colour represent a boat's crew or a government. Another citizen, no less zealous, regretted bitterly that he could

not vote for the Tories, whose principles he preferred. "But," said he, "I belong to a Gladstone Club,—not that I reverence the old man's memory, but I can get a game of billiards there." Whence we may conclude that if Lord Salisbury desires to remain in power, he should see to it that every constituency has a billiard-table, round whose edge nothing is preached save sound Toryism.

But though the majority casts its vote by pure accident, there remains a small number which is genuinely Radical or Tory. And it is this small number which gives a political interest to the canvasser's amusing task. For the canvasser soon discovers that politics are an affair not of opinion but of temperament. The anxious politician is born with the type of his party stamped large upon his brow. The sanguine, flat eye of the Radical is as easily recognised as his slightly parted lips or his weak chin. The sign of him is hopefulness, and he is impelled by inherited tendencies to believe that things will be better in a re-shuffle. He is a curious mixture of pride and humility. Protesting ignorance, he is voluble, and he would remodel the universe while you wait, if only he thought his modest self-assurance were properly respected. The Tory, on the other hand, has the cleaner intelligence, which takes some things for granted. His eye does not glitter with spurious hope; his chin does not recede to an unrestrained desire of destruction. He is generally a square-faced man of few words. He knows the meaning of contentment, and he lets his vote follow his opinion in silence, and with no profession of humility.

From a political point of view, then, a canvass is a vain sifting of the sand; and it is with some propriety that the Great Lexicographer interprets it as "a beating of hemp." But, none the less, the canvasser does not lose his time if he travel the streets of London from house to house. For since the working man is on his mettle during an election, the canvasser may gauge the spirit and independence of the people. At any rate, he may visit what is called "the masses" without the hypocritical intervention of University Settlements or the vulgar patronage of philanthropy. And in the masses he will find the strength of the country; in the masses he will find an intelligence not wholly destroyed by the printing-press, since happily there remain a few stalwarts who can neither read nor write—who (in their own admirable phrase) are no scholars. And if he do not encounter a conspicuous interest in politics, he will find that costermongers and haddock-smokers are shrewd, honest men, with no fear of any one in their heart save of the rent-collector, and of that hideous curse to poor neighbourhoods, the insurance man, who grows rich by the thriftlessness of his victims, and who issues policies to-day in the good hope that to-morrow he may cancel them.

Yet, whatever view he take

of the electorate, the canvasser cannot go through an election with equanimity. Long before polling-day his sporting blood is up, and he looks upon his candidate as a trainer looks at a race-horse. He would strain every nerve to win, even if no principle were involved; and the fact that the morals of election are shaped by a set of half-intelligible laws adds a curious zest to the sport. You may borrow a carriage in which to drive a voter to the poll, but you may not hire a hansom; that is to say, you may profit by your friends but not by your money. You may distribute printed bills by the rubbish-heap, but none of your agents may give away a piece of ribbon. So that, as your sporting blood gets up, you feel more and more keenly the rules of the game which you are playing, until at the declaration of the poll all thought of politics has vanished, you are only conscious that your man has come in first, and you shout yourself hoarse as the crowd shouts itself hoarse at Newmarket or Epsom. Such, indeed, is the impulse which drives men to fight in the street and to break one another's head in the best of good tempers. To watch the mob when their favourite has been beaten might give the amateur a false notion of politics. It is incredible, he might say, that sober men should come to fisticuffs over a matter which is quite impersonal. But let the amateur make due allowance for the spirit of sport, and nothing that happens after the returning officer has declared Mr X. or Captain Y. duly elected can affect him with surprise.

So the leaflets, which both sides know to be false, are forgotten. So the promises rashly given on either side are broken, and the voter, brought suddenly out of his box, is put back until the Government wants another mandate. And the one reflection that remains after an election is, that Democracy is a sorry farce. The silly paradox of those who believe that the greatest wisdom lies in the greatest number of fools has been covered with ridicule. Universal suffrage is happily a sham. No member obeys the orders of his constituents; no member goes to Westminster to carry out the wishes of others. He goes there for his own ambition, to support his own friends, or to expound the theories which he keeps near his heart. And as democracy is a deceit from the point of view of the elect, so it is a sham from the point of view of the elector. Every citizen may vote—that is true. But he may not vote for whom he will. No man can be nominated if he lack money or support, and thus many steps are missing in the argument which binds together the people and the people's representatives. The candidate, indeed, wants so much money and support, that the leather-seller has but a small chance in Great Britain. The clubs will not countenance him; and even if he secured the patronage of the clubs, he would still be baffled by a lack of money. So we arrive at the reason why England is not, and cannot be, a real democracy.

She collects as many voters as she can, but she does not collect popular members, and so reminds us of the hero who, when he frightened a friend by the flashing of a revolver, exclaimed, "Don't be afraid—there is no danger: I collect revolvers, but I don't collect ammunition." And similarly democracy is no danger to the State. Boroughs won't go off by themselves any more easily than revolvers. And the ammunition of popular members is still lacking.

Yet for sixty years universal suffrage has been esteemed a virtue beyond the reach of discussion; and a droller theory was never put forth upon a State. We are told that the intelligence of the people is superior to the intelligence of the expert,—that any man who can make his mark upon a piece of paper is good enough to have a voice in the government of the country. We would not choose our carpenters or bootmakers on these easy terms. But the theory was accepted in 1832, and ever since its application has been widening. And the strangest truth of all is, that the extension of the franchise has had no appreciable effect upon the House of Commons. Our government is to-day what it has always been, an oligarchy hedged about with safeguards. Nothing has changed save the form of election. The modern House of Commons, maybe, is not so finely aristocratic as the Parliament which made war upon Charles I.; yet except for its lawyers it differs little either in temper or cultivation from the House of 1830. In fact, the People sends to Westminster the same sort of men as in the old days were nominated by the great landowners. The prevailing opinion, then, is popular only in shape, and, despite the groans of the old-fashioned, the scholarship and intelligence of our legislators are very much what they were seventy years ago. The absence of classical quotation, which some deplore, implies no lowering of the standard. It merely denotes a change of manners.

So the democracy has proved a sham, and its failure is the country's triumph. But though its chief merit lies in its lack of success, a free form of government has its uses. It stops the mouths of political agitators, or rather it permits their mouths to open at infrequent intervals, and by a pretence of confidence weakens the force of opposition. Nevertheless, we cannot take a moral pride in an extended suffrage which in one aspect is merely a confession of dishonesty, a mark of the universal suspicion. A government is the country's first necessity; but nobody can be trusted to govern us unless he has first passed through a fiery ordeal. What that ordeal is matters little enough. The power to stand many hours upon one leg, the toss of a coin, a fearless capacity to "outroar the lion-throated seas"—any of these artifices would be as just and logical as election by a free and enlightened democracy. But England, above all other countries, has got on

without logic. She has prospered by accident, and found a reward even in her follies. Intent upon choosing the wisest counsellors she may, she invites to the choice all those who by temper and training are manifestly unfit for discrimination, and the result is the same as when rotten boroughs were esteemed a national bulwark.

But if in politics democracy has happily proved inefficient, it has won a more showy success in the field of letters. Yet even here its success is apparent rather than real, and if we revise our definitions we shall find that the people has not yet reached literature with its sacrilegious hand. It has merely achieved a spurious imitation. In the old days, before the advent of a literate democracy, a distinction was made between literature and printed matter; but to-day the old differences are commonly abolished, and explanations are necessary for those who would not confound the works of Homer with the printed legend of a confectioner's bag. We are all men of letters now, and in nine cases out of ten a pair of scissors is more useful than a grey goose-quill. Yet, however great may be a man's talent, however sedulous his industry, he cannot proclaim himself author without some slight experience. True, those who lack the necessary experience are few enough; but a thoughtful gentleman who elegantly signs himself "£600 a-year from it" has recently condescended to show the few novices that remain "How to Write for the Magazines." The trick, though it may be learned by most, is not quite so easy as it looks, and we confess to a mild surprise at our guide's generosity. It is evident that he is, what he would term himself, "a past-master in the art," for he makes at least £600 a-year. But there is nothing mean about him, and if you will spend three-and-six, your income may easily rival his. Think of it, you poor clerks and starving counter-jumpers! Six hundred pounds a-year are within your grasp, all gained by a profession which once did not shame a scholar and a gentleman.

What, then, must we do in order to write for the magazines? Well, first of all we must make up our minds to be "professionals," and shun the suspicion of the amateur like the plague. Now, the amateur (we are told) writes only when "he feels inspired," and is therefore a very pestilent fellow. Inspiration, indeed! While the amateur pensively awaits it, the professional has knocked off three or four "snatchy" little articles for 'Pearson's,' which we hear, not without a pang of astonishment, is "the most thoughtful and literary of the weeklies." The amateur, again, lacks "business capability," and that, as every tyro knows, is the corner-stone of literature. Wherefore, if you would sit by Shakespeare's side, if you would wear the bays upon your harassed forehead, first of all and last of all cultivate "business capability." Carry on everything on "purely business

lines." Don't spend twopence on sealing-wax when a penny will do the trick; find out the best markets for ink and papers; and buy your scissors wholesale from a well-known Sheffield firm. It may be said that Milton knew nothing of these dodges. But then Milton did not write for the magazines, and in the seventeenth century literature was merely an affair of the inspired amateur. An author, whose fame is as wide as the world, attributes "a good deal of the fame he now enjoys, and of an income that goes well into the third thousand annually, to his superior business instincts in such affairs as have been mentioned." That is to say, he watched the cost of paper and pencils, he knew precisely how many penny stamps could be bought for a shilling, and no man of his generation better deserves the renown and income which are his to-day.

The novice, having learned the cost of the raw materials, must next learn to combine them in the most profitable fashion. And at the outset he must resolutely put from him the disgrace of personal vanity. He must not write that which is consonant with his talent (if any); he must sternly subordinate his own taste to the taste of his editor. The monster who believes that he has something of his own to say, who is impelled to express his own thoughts, is no better than the inspired amateur whom we have already demolished. It is the business of a literary gent to express not his own thoughts but the thoughts of his readers—to produce "what is *wanted* rather than what *he* wants," if we may quote our mentor's exquisite phrase, italics and all. Above all, he must avoid what is called "high-class literature." "The public in general abhor it, and hate it with a deadly hatred;" and since the public swells the balance, which is the only mark of genius, "high-class literature," such as 'Zanoni' or the Waverley Novels, should be an awful warning to the conscientious "professional."

But even when he has determined, in spite of vanity and inspiration, to suppress himself, the literary gent is only at the beginning of his difficulties. Where shall he live? That depends upon whether his game is stories or articles. Articles are the better branch, but they demand a higher "business capability" than stories. They also exact residence in London, because eavesdropping is more conveniently practised in the metropolis, and it would be idle to contribute to that splendid weekly 'M.A.P.,' for instance, from the remote countryside. However, if the novice do not "move in artistic and high-class society," if he have no keyhole at which to listen, he had better stick to fiction, and then he can live where he like and lose nothing by the indulgence. This point settled, the rest is easy. A typewriting machine (on the hire system), a few balls of twine, a packet of paper-fasteners, a cheap camera, a bottle of gum, a scrap-book, and a pair of scissors are all

that is needed to make the perfect author. Of course he should also know how to find the appropriate magazine. He must not send to the 'Lady's Realm' a work which would better adorn the golden page of 'Tit-Bits'; he must not confuse the famous T. P. with the renowned Pearson; but with a little skill he can make a directory for himself, and so determine the best field for his "bright and chatty" articles.

One last danger remains to be avoided. The author must not be too well educated; and how closely imminent is the risk will appear to any one who remembers that reading, writing, and ciphering are imposed by an Act of Parliament. It is a pity, of course; but when the Education Bill was presented to Parliament the true authorship was not invented, and the few scribblers who then drove a quill neither possessed business capability nor followed the rates *per* thousand with a proper exactitude. Otherwise, no doubt, a special class for authors might have been provided at every board-school, that literary talent might escape the pitiless blight of knowledge. For, says the gentleman who makes £600 a-year from it, "education should not be too high-class in order to write for the 'popular papers,' or it may overreach itself." It may, indeed, and we weep when we consider the unnumbered men of genius who to-day might be saving money on sealing-wax and string, if only they had left in the Third Standard instead of the Fourth. "The public hate any kind of writing" — again we quote our philosopher — "which shows that its author ranks himself or herself far above the ordinary class of people in knowledge or ability." Yet we are of good heart. The "ordinary class" is still large enough, and, thank God, the cad is imperishable.

Briefly, then, we would suggest the following instructions for young authors. Be ignorant, and keep your ignorance inviolate. Be unscrupulous, and betray all the secrets which friendship or amiability intrust to you. Empty your mind (it should be easy), and echo with what accuracy you may the resounding emptiness of the general. Be economical of postage; your best method is to smear the corner with a wet finger, and refrain from stamping your envelope. The editor will then pay twopence, and believe you the victim of a dishonest postman. Write about nothing that is not trivial, and express no opinion that is not ignoble. Dream of money, and respect all men according to their balance at the bank. Keep a scrap-book, neatly indexed, and then a petty theft can save you the trouble of putting together ungrammatical sentences. Be chatty, be bright, respect your work as little as you respect yourself, and the world's respect will increase every time your name is in print. So at last you shall make the much-envied "four figures," which you would never reach at a humdrum, honest trade; and the polite-

ness of your banker will be a complete answer to the ruffians who suggest that the art of literature has as little to do with "business capability" as with a changing fashion. But that the old romance may not utterly die, declare loudly that you "love your work," and never confess which "department" pleases you best, the purchase of cheap photographs (on which you may make a commission of £30 a-year), the pasting up of your scrap-book, or the contemplation of the nimbly earned guineas.

Such is the ideal raised up by an exultant democracy, and lofty as it appear it has not yet o'ershadowed the world. The man who makes "£600 a-year from it" is merely miscalling things. It is part of his essential indelicacy to use the word literature, and we wonder that he is able to spell it aright. But as though to prove that his avarice is of no account, to remind us that writing is still pursued in some places for its own sake, the works of T. E. Brown come into our hands, and we realise at once that the rag-bags are but incidents of dishonour, which shall surely pass. Now, T. E. Brown has long been known as a poet of sentiment and character; he is revealed in his 'Letters,' most wisely edited by Mr Irwin (London: Constable), as a prose-writer of untiring spirit, as a critic whose very waywardness is interesting. The complaint is frequently made that the art of letter-writing is dead; yet here are two volumes which are worthy to be set side by side with the classics of their kind, and not lose in the comparison. For Mr Brown had all the gifts which go to the production of perfect letters. Fancy, learning, wit, courage were his in abundant measure, and were made all the livelier by a certain petulance. Above all, his letters are the letters of a poet and a scholar. As the contemplation of nature prompted him to an eloquence almost devout, so the classics prompted him to impeccable criticism. Few writers have discoursed more wisely of Sophocles and Euripides, of Hugo and Flaubert, of Petrarch and Milton, than T. E. Brown. But his taste had a curious limitation: no sooner was modern literature his theme than he judged it from the point of view of the "sobber," which he declared himself to be. For the moment he forgot the old inflexible standards, he felt only the sentiment which shook him to admiration, and he could call 'Trilby' a piece of honeysuckle, and applaud Hall Caine, perhaps with tongue in cheek, as a kind of Shakespeare.

Yet even when you disagree with him, you feel neither displeasure nor regret. You only feel that you would have given much to have met him in argument, and to have witnessed the splendour of his paradoxes. For the truth is that, behind his scholarship, behind his wide and deep tincture of letters, there glimmers always the natural man. As his poems smell of earth and sea and sky, so his temperament sweeps even his own

opinions away in a gust of passion, and he is driven to praise many books which a quieter judgment would assuredly have condemned. So these disagreements irk us not. What is more memorable is, that T. E. Brown kept his valiant enthusiasms fresh unto the end. And if we judge him from his works, we may trace a clear image of his mind and character. He was a Rabelaisian in the highest sense. There are nice Rabelaisians, he once said, and nasty Rabelaisians, and the nasty are not Rabelaisians at all; and while there was no suspicion of "nastiness" in him, he appreciated the full and honest flavours of life, and never looked out upon his fellows "through one hole." Withal he was, as he said himself, a true Celt, who preferred kindliness to candour, and who would have often suppressed a frank opinion rather than give pain. And this ardent poet, and yet more ardent mariner, was bound for many years of his life to uncongenial tasks. His real business was to be a schoolmaster; but a hearty dislike for his profession was the best safeguard, and the poet always rose superior to the pedagogue. Now and again he expresses the tragedy of his career in verse or prose. "O broken life" he wrote in the lines to Clifton,—

> "O broken life! O wretched bits of being,
> The rhythmic, patched, the even and the odd!
> But Bradda still has lichens worth the seeing,
> And thunder in her caves — thank God! thank God!"

And so when the irksome duty of Clifton appalled him, he thought of Bradda and was content.

But while he disliked the routine of teaching, scholarship never had a more loyal champion. He was against new studies, new schools. "Anything that takes off good men from the Classics," said he, "is to be deprecated;" and master of English as he was, he frankly confessed that "the twaddle of these English scholars is endless." Wherefore he supported the study of Greek with all his energy, and, when modern literature appalled him, turned in contentment to Greek or Latin. And his letters are proof enough that, despite the mill of Clifton, life was not unkind to him. The noblest pleasures were always his, the pleasures of old books and of the open air.

When a critic omitted his name from a list of minor poets, he declared with a truthful irony, "Perhaps I am among the major." And assuredly among the major he takes his place. His works are published in the Globe edition with the masterpieces of Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, and this is as near a final consecration as a poet may expect. But in T. E. Brown there were two poets—the English and the Manx—and we would that the difference had been marked by an arrangement in two volumes. The Manxman is distinguished by an easy volubility, a fervid narrative, a quick sentiment. The stories in verse which make up the 'Fo'c'sle Yarns' stand by

themselves in literature. Their spirit could not breathe in a well-ordered body; a familiar style is the essence of their vitality. They own no master, they will establish no school; but there is not one of them which is not vivid with character, palpitant with the right emotion. The English poems, on the other hand, afford a surprising contrast. Such a work as the 'Epistola ad Dakyns' will endure with the language. And what astonishes us the most is the classic grace which informs the most of them. The poet's fancy is now as lively as the inspiration of the Greek Anthologists, now as delicate as the devices of our Cavaliers. But the great influence upon him is Milton, whose harmonies are heard in many a stately line. Thus it is our good fortune to study this artist in prose and verse at a time when ignorance and avarice are doing their worst for literature, when few men are secure from the insolence of "bookmen" or from the squalor of prying paragraphs. Yet, so long as masterpieces like these encourage us, may we not look upon the "magazines" with indifference, and smile at the smug content of the well-rewarded democrat?

ON THE MOVE WITH BULLER.

SPITZ KOP,
16*th Sept.* 1900.

SINCE the remarkable series of operations by which the Boers were compelled to evacuate first the line of the Biggarsberg and then the famous position of Laing's Nek, the Natal Field Force had spent several unexciting weeks. The fitful activity of the enemy along the line from Volksrust to near Heidelberg had given rise to no incidents of a dramatic kind. The Transvaal by the borders of the Orange River Colony is a singularly uninteresting tract. It was, therefore, with no little satisfaction that we learnt, after our chief had paid a flying visit to Pretoria, that we were to make a big move northwards towards the Lourenço Marques railway. And during the latter part of July there was much speculation between Greylingstad and Newcastle as to what divisions, brigades, batteries, and so forth were to take part in Sir Redvers Buller's fresh advance.

General Lyttelton's division, which since the relief of Ladysmith had been engaged on the dull task of watching our line of communications, was selected. Lord Dundonald's and General Brocklehurst's mounted brigades were added. Some howitzers and heavy guns were got together, and early in August commenced a march which during the initial period amounted to little more than an unopposed trek, but which in its later stages has given rise to operations of a singularly varied character in a beautiful country, and has brought the British army in South Africa considerably nearer to the goal at which it has been aiming for so many months—the final subjugation of our brother Boers.

Advancing from near Pardekop, attended by a gigantic park of supplies, the army of some 15,000 men easily brushed aside the feeble opposition of a few hundred of the enemy at Amersfoort, and, passing by Ermelo, traversed rolling downs, diversified here and there by groups of farms, till it gained touch with General French's division near the Middleburg-Belfast railway-line. Then there came a welcome halt to allow portions of Lord Roberts's army to come up in line with us, ready for an advance towards Komati Poort, and to pick up and set in order our own communications with Pretoria. And it became evident that we were no longer to traverse extensive stretches of open undulating country almost unopposed, but were again about to try conclusions with our stubborn foe among ravines and hills such as we had left behind us in Natal, and were to hear anew the booming of Long Tom and the "tick-tack" of the Mauser rifle.

The condition of General French's troops took us, it must be confessed, rather

aback. To the Natal Field Force, with its elaborate system of supplies and abundant transport, its well-clothed men and sufficiently fed horses, contact with troops who lived upon the country, whose vehicles included every class of cart, carriage, and waggon known in South Africa, and who depended even for their boots and apparel largely upon looted stores and homesteads, came with something of a shock. We learnt for the first time how the organisation of Lord Roberts's huge force had broken down under the strain put upon it by rapid movements and by an insufficiently guarded railway. And we realised, most of us for the first time, of what incalculable service to the army at large our humdrum work in opening up and rendering secure the line from the Natal frontier to near Johannesburg had been and would continue to be.

After a short pause we advanced again, slowly, very slowly, for the Boers were now in front of us and in some force, meaning business, and at a place called Geluk's Farm we were brought up short by the enemy, admirably posted and with several guns, covering an extensive front and blocking the road to Dalmanutha station on the railway-line. The wonderful instinct which these uncouth, ill-educated farmers are endowed with for selecting ground to fight on was demonstrated here in signal fashion. This was not a case of Laing's Nek or of Pieter's Hill. Our antagonists were not posted on commanding ground from which all avenues of approach were dominated and looked down upon. On the contrary, their line of defence was—or appeared to be, for it was by no means easy to detect its whereabouts—at a lower level than the terrain immediately in front of it within rifle range. And to reconnoitre their position it was necessary to show upon the sky-line, and to offer oneself a target for their long-range but disagreeably accurate musketry fire.

For three days we faced this position and kept our antagonists busy. Guns and pom-poms joined freely in the fray on both sides. And at the end of the third day it did not appear to the uninitiated that we had made any appreciable progress, while there was no question but that we had suffered very appreciable losses, as a lengthy train of ambulances trailing snakewise towards the railway at Belfast made manifest. But all this time we were working by slow degrees from right to left, concealed from our opponents' view, towards a point where the Boers were obliged to occupy commanding ground called Bergendal, towards the flank, where some assistance could be hoped for from Generals Pole-Carew and French, and in a direction which tended to throw our force athwart the hostile line of retreat into the Lydenburg highlands.

We may have been somewhat lucky in that the Boers rested their right upon a farm and kopje, offering an admirable

target to our guns. But the Natal Field Force can fairly claim that the four days' fight, which ended in the total rout of a well-posted and determined enemy, was one of the tactical achievements of the war. Lulled into fancied security by successfully repelling attacks against their front, which were in reality only demonstrations, the hostile leaders were not prepared for practically our whole force falling upon their right flank, for a terrific bombardment of one end of their long defensive line, and for a resolute assault by British infantry under cover of a mass of guns.

Bergendal was Pieter's Hill over again on a smaller scale, and almost equally disastrous for the Boers. The defenders were resolute and confident, well posted, well prepared. The assailants were determined to achieve decisive victory. The Rifle Brigade and the artillery shared the main honours of the day, the former, however, paying heavily in casualties for the gallant rush which sent the survivors flying panic-stricken from the kopje which they defended with grim tenacity under a storm of lyddite and of shrapnel. And the enemy were streaming off towards Machadodorp, a broken rabble, early enough in the day to allow the inquisitive to visit one spot where our antagonists had stood their ground with really admirable courage.

It was a gruesome spectacle. Picture a rocky knoll strewn with great boulders and covering an area of perhaps two acres. On this the defenders had erected massive sangars, forming breastworks shoulder high, and had fitted in this artificial cover with the massive crags and rocks with characteristic skill and judgment. In these pits—for such they were — our adversaries probably believed that they were safe. But the very solidity of these improvised defences made them dangerous. On one, struck outside by a lyddite shell which had merely shivered the rocks without piercing the breastwork, lay heaped up three dead Boers. Altogether, scattered about upon this stony hummock were over a dozen dead, some with ghastly injuries, others slain by mere concussion, and all so begrimed with dust and lyddite fumes and powder smoke that they were almost indistinguishable from the rocks among which they had been stricken down. The prisoners —there were several taken— admitted that their experience had been a terrible one.

A visit to the farm-house offered convincing proof that in their proper place shells charged with high explosives are tremendous engines of destruction. A single 5-inch lyddite shell, fired early in the day, had penetrated the outer wall and burst inside. The interior of the house was almost gutted. Part of the roof was blown away. The doors were rent and torn from off their hinges. An iron bedstead lay twisted and contorted and crumpled up, a shapeless and fantastic heap. Chairs and tables were strewn about in fragments. All was in ruins, as though some mighty

earthquake had wrought the havoc and not a few pounds of gelatinous stuff, which the experts say it is most difficult to detonate. If one projectile can do this damage, how are buildings to be defended in the future? We all remember De Neuville's pictures of the Franco-German war—the church of Le Bourget, the graveyard at St Privat, "La dernière cartouche." Has warfare reached a stage when such incidents have become impossible?

The victory of Bergendal was complete in all but one respect. Except for one pom-pom taken on the kopje by the Rifle Brigade, not a single gun had fallen into our hands. There were two Long Toms and three or four other hostile guns in action, some of which only moved off when the day was won. The ground was not, it must be admitted, favourable for cavalry; but it was very far from impracticable, and the Boers have not English horses to drag away their artillery at a gallop when in danger. A team of oxen is not a difficult mark for a carbine at 300 yards. But even after eight months' fighting in this country our regular mounted troops have not learned that it is not by slashing with the sabre or prodding with the lance that the cavalry soldier participates in modern fighting; it has not dawned upon the trooper that the object of his horse is to convey him rapidly to some spot where he can dismount and use his firearms to some purpose on the enemy.

Next day we marched on Machadodorp, and after some miles gained touch with the retreating enemy. On reaching the crest of the hill above the little town which Mr Kruger made his capital when Pretoria fell, we saw to our delight a long train of carts and waggons climbing up the opposite side of the valley in slow procession. A few snipers still occupied some houses, and the horse and field artillery were compelled to come into action at some distance from the outskirts, whereupon it at once became evident that the string of vehicles coiling upwards on the opposite slopes were farther off than in this clear atmosphere most of us had estimated. Where were the long-range guns—the 5-inch and 12-pounders? Where indeed! Detained inexplicably at the rear of the column, they were brought up at a lumbering trot only in time to fire a few shots as the tail of the hostile convoy disappeared over the crest four or five miles away.

Dundonald's Irregular Mounted Corps and the Horse Artillery pushed after them, and, on reaching the summit of the ridge beyond the town, were greeted with annoying shell-fire from the hill-tops across the next valley, to which our guns were unable to make reply. Fortunately the two 5-inch guns were sent on after them, and, after having one team shattered by a well-aimed shrapnel and overturning the other gun, made short work of the Boer artillery, and then filled in the short space of time still available ere the sun went down in firing on a string of baggage-waggons

making off towards Waterval Onder, causing them no little damage, and making all who witnessed it bitterly regret their late arrival on the scene.

Next day we advanced to Helvetia, the enemy well ahead of us, and there met and bivouacked alongside of the troops under Generals French and Pole-Carew. So confident were most of us that we should halt at least a day that we hardly took the trouble to look up acquaintances that afternoon, deferring this pleasant duty till the morrow. But early on the following day Kitchener's and Dundonald's brigades were off again on a special mission. Our object was, by a detour over the hills, to reach the railway beyond Waterval Onder, where the prisoners were known to be, and where it was hoped Mr Kruger still was, and to cut the line towards the Portuguese frontier. But after going half-way the prisoners were descried filing along the railway-line towards Machadodorp, and it was ascertained that Oom Paul and his railway-carriage had gone off eastwards. So the force halted, and eventually turned towards Lydenburg, followed by the rest of Lyttelton's division.

On the second day of the march towards Lydenburg we were suddenly brought to a standstill. The Boers had for the most part retreated with their guns in this direction, and, having been given a moment's breathing-space, had occupied a very formidable semicircular position at the head of a long valley followed by the road. After a reconnaisance, during which the mounted troops were shelled with some effect, General Buller decided not to assault but to await reinforcement. A pause ensued, the monotony of which was diversified by a Long Tom suddenly opening on our bivouacs from a commanding eminence, and by the capture of a neighbouring ridge on which the enemy was erecting breastworks. Then General Ian Hamilton's heliographs were descried among the hills to our left—his division had hurried up from the west to co-operate with us—and two days later the combined force was settling down in Lydenburg, intent chiefly upon replenishing supplies out of the stores of that bright and picturesque little centre, when suddenly shells came tumbling into the bivouacs, and we discovered that the Boers had several big guns in position on the hills east of the town outside the mountain road to Spitz Kop, and learnt that our stay was to be of the very shortest.

The enemy was attacked next day and driven from this very strong position by a series of manœuvres which showed our infantry at its very best. At real mountain work the Boers are certainly not our tactical masters, and this action, in which our casualties, but for one single lucky shrapnel from a Long Tom, would have been almost nil, satisfied our obstinate antagonists that the time for fighting was over, and that they must devote all their attention to making good their

escape, and employ all their skill and artifice in saving the long train of guns and waggons which they had succeeded in withdrawing from the stricken field of Bergendal.

General Kitchener took the left and General Ian Hamilton the right. The guns pushed up the road in the centre. Everything worked smoothly and without one single hitch, and late in the afternoon, shivering among the driving mist and in an icy blast, we were admiring the ingenuity of the enemy's shelters for his gun detachments, which had absolutely secured them against the shells of our long-range guns in Lydenburg, close as many of them had burst around their distant target. It was bitter cold, there was no chance of getting transport up that night, no water was available, so General Buller, always solicitous as to the comfort of his men, parked the guns under protection of the Gordons, and sent off all the rest—infantry, cavalry, and gunners with their horses—back into the valley where their baggage was.

We were, some of us, detained a little seeing after various details, and were just about to hasten down in the twilight in search of our bivouacs, when of a sudden from high ground on the left there came a thundering cheer, followed by a rush of many feet. Out of the growing darkness strode a long winding column of kilted men, and the Gordons all around us were hastening towards it in a great, humming, eager swarm, officers and men jostling each other, discipline and ceremony cast aside, for a great moment had come in the history of a renowned regiment. The old 75th, with their Dargai laurels scarcely faded, were meeting the 92nd on a scene of victory amid mountains such as rear their crests in distant Aberdeenshire. For a few minutes followed buzzing conversation, anxious questions, cheery greetings. Then, clear as a trumpet-note, rang out the unwonted word of command: "Fall in First Battalion." Half the regiment streamed off down the hill, to march back south with General Hamilton towards Belfast; the other half remained to keep their vigil by the guns among the clouds, and—and I wish all 'Maga's' staff, from editorial chair to junior apprentice in the composing-room, had been there to see a sight which none who saw it will speedily forget.

We were afoot betimes next morning; but the hour spent in reclimbing the long hill prevented the actual pursuit of the fugitive Boers from commencing as early as was perhaps desirable. All through the early part of a long tiring day we were slowly driving a well-handled rearguard across uplands, cleft here and there by deep ravines and pierced in places by rocky forbidding-looking kopjes, the scenery gradually growing grander and the opposition more determined, till, after compelling the enemy to evacuate a lofty ridge by dint of heavy shrapnel fire and a neat flanking movement,

we found ourselves suddenly with a tremendous declivity in front of us, amounting almost to an abyss, and realised that we were on the Mauchsberg, our highest point.

Before us lay spread out a noble mountain panorama. But it was not the splendour of the landscape nor the natural elation at thrusting our antagonists off from this dominant altitude which caused the murmurs of excitement, spreading from panting group to panting group, till the whole mountain seemed to throb and chatter. Far below us, across a vast ravine, was descried a huge train of baggage-waggons, toiling painfully up the narrow mountain road, and travelling right across our very front. We all knew well that here and there among those baggage-waggons there were hostile guns, that some of these were probably 15-pounders taken from us during the numerous unfortunate episodes which have marked this war, and that there were certainly included in that struggling column two ponderous Long Toms, the capture of which would exercise a moral effect out of all proportion to the actual value of this heavy ordnance to the Boers.

The Chestnut Troop was speedily on the spot, greeted with resounding cheers. Scarcely a day had passed during the previous fortnight when this battery had not been engaged—often right up to the hilt. So many horses had been hit that the detachments were all now on foot: even the guns could only be got along by most strenuous exertion. However, it was wanted. That was enough. And it somehow reached a terrace-like position, designed, it really seemed, by nature for the deployment of artillery. There followed some moments of suspense during the very few preliminaries gone through by horse-artillery ere it opens fire, a boom, and then a groan of bitter disappointment. The vast dip of the topographical features and the limpid air had combined to mislead us as to distances. Our prey was out of range of the horse and field artillery, and we must wait for the heavy guns with their formidable shrapnel to smash the convoy up.

But the afternoon wore on and evening stole upon us, and those huge guns, the marvellous mobility of which even in these highlands excited general admiration, never came. A great opportunity passed away, and night closed in upon a force dejected in spite of success, disheartened though the foe was fleeing and in grievous straits. The Boers have taken so many guns from us, we have taken from them so very few. For the tactical ineptitude which held the long-range artillery back at Machadodorp there was, at least, the excuse that pursuing a routed army was to a certain extent a new experience. No such plea could be put forward now: we had thrown away our chance, and in pursuit an error once committed can seldom be repaired.

Next day at earliest dawn

our heavy artillery was in action and ready, on the very spot where its presence twelve hours before would have delivered the entire Boer transport into our hands. But the enemy had given us the slip. Although a Long Tom remained in action and gave the gunners some amusement, and although the tail of the hostile convoy had not yet withdrawn completely out of danger, the enemy had during the night passed his guns and waggons along the remarkable military defile known as the "Devil's Knuckles," a razor-ridge of many windings, where the road is sometimes crawling along the face of precipitous mountain slopes, and at others actually serpentines over the crest, with yawning abysses on each hand. We kept our opponents moving, and there was an exciting moment when Long Tom was being got away under shrapnel fire from our field-artillery: in the evening, indeed, some of Strathcona's Horse got within rifle range of the retreating guns. But it was clear that the fugitives had now got too much start. And although we captured some supplies and ammunition, and although the mounted men terrified the hostile rearguard into actually riding off ahead of their Long Tom, the crew of which stuck to the gun with fine devotion, we bivouacked for the night with little hope of effecting anything further in the immediate future.

And so it proved. Next day we marched to Spitz Kop, our destination, some of the Boer waggons still visible through powerful glasses. And then all ranks hastened to make themselves as comfortable as circumstances permitted, glad of a rest in a charming valley offering abundant grazing to our weary horses and our half-starved transport animals, with that placid feeling of content with which the hunting man, his war-paint doffed, sinks into his easy-chair after a good day's sport and conjures up again before his cosy fire the incidents of the previous few hours.

The Pretoria people were rather inclined till recently to scoff at us as slow, forgetting that on the Tugela we were engaged on genuine operations of war under conditions of no little difficulty, not in driving guerilla bands across territory free and open as our Salisbury Plain. Do they do so now? We have herded the Boers like sheep before us for two hundred miles. When on well-selected ground they turned at bay and gathered their guns around them for a trial of strength, we outmanœuvred them first, then crushed them utterly in pitched battle. We have driven them into those rugged highlands where they boasted that we could not follow, and have hunted them over mountain-tracks from day to day, capturing stores and prisoners and ammunition. And if we have failed to lay our grasp upon the remnants of their baggage and their cherished guns, we have at least been within an ace of doing so, and may perhaps do it yet.

AFTER THE ANNEXATION.

In March last we asked what was to be done with South Africa after the war? The question now is, What is to be the next step after annexation? Thanks to Lord Roberts and the gallant men under him, the war is practically ended, the republics have been suppressed, and their territories incorporated with the British Empire. The country has shown its confidence in Lord Salisbury's Administration. The majority in the new Parliament may not be appreciably greater than it was before the dissolution. The election has demonstrated, nevertheless, that a very numerous majority of the people of Great Britain are convinced that the war was just as well as inevitable, and that the Government which has conducted it to a successful issue is the proper and only agency for finishing the work of establishing British supremacy in South Africa on a sure foundation.

All the great centres of commerce, intelligence, and education have spoken with a voice that cannot be mistaken. The brain of the nation is with Lord Salisbury. The cranks and the parochial vestrymen are on the other side. There will always be men who are convinced that they are right, mainly because they differ from the majority of their kind; and they are generally the same men who profess to believe in the infallibility of the multitude. They are the last to admit that the majority may be right when it is against them.

In the remote rural and fishing districts many of the electors are unable to appreciate questions of imperial policy. A half-holiday for ploughmen, an eight-hours' day for labourers, some thorny Church or licensing question, a fancied slight to local personages, or neglect of local interests—these are the motives which influence votes. Others, more intelligent, have been duped by the garb of Imperialism assumed for the occasion by so many Radical candidates. Many, we believe, who are at one with the Unionists on the South African question have voted for their pet Radical, comforted by the reflection that he will have no power to turn the scale. With all this, if the Irish vote is excluded, and every one knows that it only belongs to the Opposition so long as the bait of Home Rule is thrown out, the party in the House of Commons adverse to Lord Salisbury is contemptible in numbers, to say the least.

The responsibility for the lasting settlement of the South African question rests, therefore, upon the Unionist Government. The nation desires a thorough well-considered piece of work. No excuse for shortcoming or failure can be founded on fear of what the opposite side may do or profess to think.

It must be admitted that no harder problem has been put before a British Ministry for

many years. If it were merely a question of subjugating and governing and eventually reconciling the Dutch in the late republics, it would be comparatively simple. The main difficulties arise from the way in which the interests of the older colonies, especially of the Cape, are interwoven with those of the Transvaal and Orange River.

The condition which must govern the lines on which a settlement is to be made is the hostility of the Dutch to the English. The information that reaches England from South Africa goes to show that there is a very bitter feeling on the part of the Dutch. It is not confined to the people of the defunct republics, but unfortunately animates a large number of their brethren in the Cape Colony also, and to a less extent in Natal. In considering how to settle the country, this feeling must be taken into account, and cannot be ignored. There are people who hold that the true and only way of overcoming this hostility is to leave everything in the conquered country as much unchanged as possible. They would trust to time and a just administration to reconcile the people, and to create a spirit of submission, if not of loyalty, to British supremacy. The soundness of this view may be questioned on more grounds than one. The feelings of the Dutch towards the people and the Government of Great Britain amount, it is to be feared, to a deep-rooted antagonism. They are not the mere transitory effects of the war. In the Transvaal this dislike may have been caused to some extent, or at any rate intensified, by mistakes on our side. No errors on the part of the British Government can account for it in the Orange River territory or in the Cape Colony. It has been attributed to the influence of the Afrikander Bond, aggravated by the Jameson raid. The Afrikander Bond, however, is the result, not the cause, of opposition to British rule. The root of the matter lies in race-feeling, fed and inflamed by lies and misrepresentations, and intensified by the effeminate action of Mr Gladstone's Government after Majuba.

We have, then, to deal with the hostility of the Dutch. They are not a people of quick temper and passionate emotions, but a stolid, sullen, and persistent race, slow to lay aside prejudices or part with illusions. Arguing against the idea of leaving any form of independence to the republics after the war, we said in March—

"Their contempt for the *rooineks* and hatred to them would be as great as before the war. They are a patient people, and can bide their time. . . . They will begin again, and strain every nerve to prepare for a new attempt to overthrow our power, when in the future, near or distant, fortune gives them the chance."

Writing in the 'Times' of October 6, 1900, the Afrikander who signs himself P. S. says—

"Under no circumstances will we Afrikanders in the Transvaal, the Free State, or the Cape give up our aspirations for independence. My native town, Colesberg, did its duty; and if all the other parts of the Cape State (I will not call it a colony) had

done as well, we should have had our president at Cape Town before this, and Roberts and his hordes, the dregs of the human race, would never have been allowed to land."

And again in the same letter—

If we Afrikanders are compelled for a period to remain under the British flag, we can look forward to the time when we shall be able to help your enemies, and to treat the British garrisons in Africa as the patriotic men and women of Mexico treated the French soldiers there between 1862 and 1870.

It would be unjust to consider "P. S." a fair exponent of Afrikander feeling, at least so far as his coarse and venomous expressions are concerned. It must be remembered, however, that he is not an ignorant Boer from the veldt. He is not a native of the Free State or the Transvaal who has nursed his wrath by dwelling on the real or imaginary ill-treatment of his country by Great Britain. He is an educated and travelled man, who has been born or has lived under the Queen's Government, and under a constitution as free as that of this country. He and his townspeople who "did their duty" so well have not, and do not pretend to have, any grievance against the British Government. When he says that they will never give up their aspirations, and that they will watch their opportunity and annihilate our garrisons when it comes, he may be taken as giving a true indication of the spirit with which we have to deal.

Is it wise to trust to time for the softening of this hostility? Who can tell how long its influence will be allowed to act? In the present state of Europe, he must be a sanguine man who will reckon on time as an ally. A generation must pass in all probability before the Dutch in South Africa can be trusted to acquiesce in British supremacy. Meanwhile, such measures of precaution must be adopted as to leave them neither the opportunity to rise nor the hope of success if they attempt it.

We have, then, to deal with a people animated by a determined spirit of hostility. This people, moreover, has been organised for many years past on a quasi-military system,—accustomed to shoot and to ride from their boyhood—ready to take the field at a moment's notice, unhampered by any difficulty in procuring transport and supplies. If they are to be left as nearly as may be in their present conditions, each district will have its commando prepared to come out at the call of the field-cornet, and take advantage of any weakness or carelessness on the part of the Government. They will have been disarmed, it is true, as far as possible. It is not an easy task, however, to disarm a country of this nature. To make a thorough disarmament measures would have to be taken of greater severity than the Government would care to sanction. The number of rifles at present in the hands of the Boers and the disloyal colonists must be very great; and, even if a Mauser were recovered from every adult male, enough would remain in all probability to arm thousands of men. Nor is it easy to prevent importation of arms and ammunition into South Africa, even if the Sea

Customs service were under imperial control.

Another matter that must be taken into account is the experience gained by the Boers in the war. They have learnt their strength, if we also have learnt ours. They have learnt that a comparatively few men in a well-prepared position can defy a very superior force. They have seen that in order to turn such positions the attacking force must be greatly in excess of the defenders. They know now, if they did not know it before, that we are completely dependent for reinforcements and supplies on the railways. If England were involved in a European war, or in any difficulty in the East, the Boers might maintain a revolt until they received assistance and munitions of war from their friends in Europe. On these grounds we hold that, so far from leaving the conquered territories as much as possible in their present conditions, we should endeavour to break up their organisation by redistribution of districts within the States, and by alteration of their external boundaries. Writing in March, we said, "The main point to keep in view is to break up the territories of the republics, so as to destroy their cohesion and create a divergence of interests between the different parts." It seems necessary, in particular, to give Natal command of the passes leading into the Orange River and the Transvaal territories, and of the railway lines well beyond the passes. If the Natal Government held these posts of vantage, and if a strong customs guard and garrison of British troops were placed at Koomati Poort, it would prevent attempts to seize the passes or to smuggle arms in through Portuguese territory.

It is to be hoped that this question of the dismemberment of the conquered republics will be carefully considered before it is decided to maintain the republics territorially intact. There is danger in leaving them as they are, with capitals, boundaries, interests, and no doubt for the main part the officials, unchanged. There will be an outcry on the part of pro-Boers here and on the Continent. England will be accused of murdering a nation, and her action compared with the partition of Poland and the suppression of Finland nationality. The truth is, that the people of the late republics have no claim to be considered a nation. They are the offspring of a schism from the body politic—a schism, moreover, of very modern date. They went forth into the wilderness, like the Mormons, to be free to enjoy their lives in their own way, unfettered by the trammels of civilisation. They must be compelled to return to the fold, and to amalgamate with the older order of things from which they broke away. To allow them to retain their separate formations will render the accomplishment of this end more difficult.

The embodiment of a large force of military police has already been undertaken. This is a wise course, and analogous

to that followed by Lord Dufferin in the case of Burma. It is no doubt preparatory to placing the conquered territories under a civil government. The governor may be a military man or a civilian, — it is a matter of no moment, so long as he is a good man. But the sooner the reign of law, with a regular procedure and constituted courts, is established, the better. After organised resistance has been put down, military rule is a mistake. Soldiers, especially soldiers fresh from the field of battle, are not, as such, good administrators of civil government. There is a vast difference between military government and a civil government supported by military force. When the civil government is established, it will have at its disposal a mobile police force, and should have little difficulty in disposing of such guerilla bands as may remain in the field. It will be able to bring systematic pressure to bear on the whole population for the suppression of these disturbers of the peace. Ordinances will no doubt be passed to enable the magistrates to enforce the principle of joint responsibility.

In dealing with a hostile population, it is almost impossible to secure the apprehension and conviction of individuals guilty of crimes against the peace, and it is a mistake to attempt it. Railways will be pulled up, telegraph-wires cut, isolated officers or small parties of police or soldiers will be murdered or attacked. If in such cases the magistrate is empowered by law to assess the whole district in which the offence has occurred to a fine, and to levy it from the residents in proportion to their means, the offenders will soon become unpopular, and will be suppressed or given up. At the same time, the Government must take powers to remove, and, if necessary, confine persons believed to be aiding the gangs of marauders in the field. When a homestead is found occupied only by women and children, they should be conveyed to a safe and distant place until their male protectors surrender. If this is not done, such places will become posts for supplying the men who are out with food and information. The burning of farms and homesteads should be very rarely, if ever, resorted to. It is desirable that the men should return to a peaceful life and to their ordinary occupations. The destruction of their homes will not encourage them to come in. Besides, the more farms that are destroyed, the less will be the ability of the people to contribute to the revenue.

Given a good governor and carefully chosen magistrates and judges, the adoption of measures such as those suggested will bring the country into order in a very short time, and with little need to use the sterner forms of punishment. The people as a body will soon realise that, if they desire to lead comfortable and prosperous lives, they must range themselves on the side of order. Measures of the kind described have been adopted with complete success in other countries.

They will succeed equally with the Boers.

In March last we urged the appointment of a governor-general for South Africa, with a council to advise him. It is a measure which will be found essential to the good administration of the country, and which circumstances will lead the Government to adopt in the near future, if not now. The necessity of harmonising the action of the various provincial governors, of directing and controlling the armed forces, of ensuring the efficiency and impartiality of the judges and magistrates, and of securing the proper treatment of the native population, will render the appointment of a governor-general with ample powers unavoidable. There are several reasons for giving him the support of a council. It is not suggested that the members of the South African governor-general's council should be, as in India, heads of departments, as well as advisers on all important matters of policy. The African provinces must be, from the circumstances of the case, to a great extent independent of central control. But a certain degree of subordination is necessary; and this, we anticipate, will be accepted with less opposition by the older colonies, if they are represented on the council by members who have their confidence and are acquainted with their circumstances. A governor-general, moreover, who is supported by a council of local statesmen of experience and repute will carry much more weight with the home authorities than one whose advice is merely the expression of his individual opinion. His recommendations or demands cannot easily be set aside or disputed by the Home Government, if they are backed by his council. He can only hold the post for a short term of years. Urgent cases may arise, when the incumbent is new to office, and the British Government may hesitate to act immediately on the advice of a man who has only lately taken the reins. If, for example, Sir Alfred Milner had asked to have the garrison of South Africa reinforced by 20,000 men, in view of the attitude of the Transvaal at the end of 1898, who will assert that his request would have been listened to? Suppose, on the other hand, that Lord Curzon and his council had demanded reinforcements for India, on the ground that they held them to be necessary for the safety of the empire, would any Ministry or House of Commons have dared to take the risk of refusing compliance? Again, a governor-general cannot, until he has held office for some time, understand the bearings of local questions, or know the characters of the leading men with whom he has to reckon. It is only right that he should have the assistance of those who have this knowledge, and can help him to attain it, and are responsible for the advice they give to him.

The very important question of the method and the agency by which the governor-general is to be connected with the Home Government and controlled by it was discussed in

'Maga' of March. The conclusion arrived at was, that African affairs might well be removed from the cognisance of the Colonial Office and entrusted to a Secretary of State for Africa, aided by a council of three or more men of ripe African experience. There may be reasons against increasing the number of Cabinet Ministers. But it appears to us now as necessary as it did in March to ensure that not only South African but all African affairs shall be administered by a State Department with no other responsibilities, and the constitution of which shall be a guarantee that it possesses the requisite local knowledge. If it is a question of expense, true economy, it may be urged, is in favour of it. The cost of mistakes arising from ignorance or supineness will be a thousand times greater than that of an efficient African Office.

It may be permitted to repeat here what was said in March: "The Government of South Africa is a very big business, and is rapidly growing. It is not possible for a Colonial Secretary to do justice to it. After the war is over, the work will be of still greater magnitude and difficulty. If mistakes are made the troubles caused may be endless." The time is now rapidly approaching when the taxation of the conquered countries, the garrisons required to maintain them in security, the interests of the native tribes within them, the customs revenue, the control and management of the railways, and the relations of the various colonies of South Africa to each other in respect of police and other matters, will have to be considered and decided. It is not possible that a Minister, much of whose time is taken up by attendance in the House, can give proper attention to these big questions and also to the affairs of our other colonies.

It may be answered that these matters will be dealt with and practically determined by the local authorities on the spot. If Sir Alfred Milner is appointed governor-general, and invested with suitable authority, all that can be done locally will be done, and well done. There will remain, however, much that must come before Parliament, and a good deal that may require legislation. There is hardly one of the questions which have been referred to, and which only touch the surface of the business, that is not a matter for the Cabinet to discuss and decide. It is not interference that is advocated—far from it. The best guarantee against parliamentary interference or unnecessary meddling on the part of the Home Goverment will be the knowledge that the proposals laid before the House are the fruits of careful discussion on the spot by a governor-general in council, and of close examination in London by a secretary of state who has given his whole attention to the matter, and has had the assistance of the best local experience that can be procured.

THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

THE general election has come and gone. There was very little excitement over it, notwithstanding the momentous issue which it presented for decision. The conclusion, however, was foregone, and in point of argument there was nothing new to be said on either side. The tedium of it was relieved by the extraordinary virulence of animosity which was directed against Mr Chamberlain. It helped to make the Colonial Secretary the hero of the dissolution, the prominent representative in the eyes of the British public and of foreign countries of the policy which was on trial. His enemies never intended to confer this distinction upon him by their maladroit manœuvres, but his allies will not grudge it to him. No man deserves better at the hands of the Unionist party. He forfeited the reversion of the Liberal leadership, he struck the hardest blows of all against the policy of Home Rule, and he so conducted the quarrel with the Boers that a firm and united resistance of the mother country and her colonies to their dangerous pretensions was aroused and consistently maintained. To those who look back to the time when a small majority of only 30 threw out the first Home Rule Bill of Mr Gladstone, the peril which has now vanished reassumes its forgotten proportions. The old Whig party was not strong enough to hold the balance of power. Mr Bright's day was past. And if the energy and combative ardour which Mr Chamberlain brought into the contest had been placed at the service of the other side, the position of this country to-day might have been very different from what it is. Home Rule in Ireland would have meant Boer ascendancy in South Africa. What might have been the result both in India and the colonies of this twofold blow to British ascendancy it is fortunately unnecessary to inquire. We have escaped a tremendous peril, and if Mr Chamberlain has been the hero of the dissolution it is because the instinct of the nation, as well as the wrath of his opponents, tells it that he has taken the foremost and probably the most decisive part in averting it.

But while recognising Mr Chamberlain's title to public honour and gratitude, he is not, and never has been, a leader of the old Conservative party. Nor is it his Ministry which has appealed to the country. Lord Salisbury now occupies this unique position, that alone of the Queen's Prime Ministers he has twice received at the hands of the constituencies an overwhelming and enthusiastic mandate in favour of his Government and his policy. In 1895 the country decisively rejected Home Rule, and gave to Lord Salisbury's Government a mandate in favour of firm government in Ireland. In 1900 it has ratified that de-

cision by substantially renewing the phenomenal majority of the former year, and in addition has ratified the policy of his Government in South Africa, declaring unmistakably in favour of rejecting Boer pretensions in that quarter of the world. The British democracy is determined to maintain, and if necessary to extend, its empire. The increasing majorities by which the more powerful constituencies returned Lord Salisbury's supporters, in spite of all forebodings of abstention, emphasise this decision. The rejection, we might say the repudiation, of three such candidates as Dr Clark at Caithness, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, and Mr Philip Stanhope, is to the same effort. So also, we are proud to say, is the vote in Scotland, where two seats in Glasgow, one in Edinburgh, one in Dumfriesshire, Sutherlandshire, Aberdeenshire (East), and the Wick Burghs have been captured by the Unionists; and where, for the first time since 1832, Liberals are in a minority. Europe, the Colonies, and the Boers must alike understand that all the platitudes which have been talked about magnanimity, generosity, independence, peoples rightly struggling to be free, and so forth, have been dismissed. The electors have understood that it was a question of downright hostility to the British Empire, in the interests of tyranny and corruption, on the part of a foreign gang who plundered equally Boers and Uitlanders; and have voted accordingly, in a manner which does not admit of a second opinion as to their meaning and decision.

For ourselves, we are gratified beyond measure at the result of the election, and believe it to be a wise and prudent decision. To attribute to the electoral body a warlike and aggressive spirit would be wilfully to misinterpret it. Its decision is, we believe, in the main due to a feeling of intense relief that the two great disasters of modern times—the retrocession of the Transvaal to the armed invaders of Natal, and the abandonment of Gordon and the Soudan—have been retrieved, and that all menace from either the Mahdi's savages or Mr Kruger's composite forces is at an end. It is a message of encouragement to the loyalists in South Africa. It is an intimation, as merciful and considerate as it is final, both to Boers and pro-Boers, that no half-hearted compromise will be made. The days of Majuba settlements have vanished like a bad dream. The Boers of the Transvaal must be coerced into the recognition of the British supremacy in the interests of peace, order, and good government; and when they have submitted to the inevitable, their position will be as free, prosperous, and secure as their brethren in Cape Colony, Natal, Rhodesia, and elsewhere have universally found it.

The election speeches and literature we considered to be singularly dull, and only enlivened now and again by

the personalities which centred round Mr Chamberlain. There was, moreover, a monotony about these which soon deprived them of any interest, triviality and endless repetition being their chief characteristics. The two main features of the discussion which linger in our memory, now that the echoes of controversy have died down, are, first, the reproaches of "P. S.," an anonymous and ancient Boer, who requited the hospitality of the country by abusive letters to the 'Times' at the beginning of the war, and repeated them at the end; and, second, the lugubrious vaticinations of Mr Morley in his postscript manifesto to his constituents. With regard to the former, a repetition, after our crushing victories, of the earlier taunts about the degeneracy of the race, the worthlessness of the British soldier, the tremendous power of the Boers, and the soap-bubble character of British power, "floating majestically in the air," are wanting in humour and common-sense. But if any credence at all is to be attached to this accepted correspondent of the 'Times,' his specific complaints are worth attention. He says that "we Africanders have been grossly deceived and deserted by the European Powers, who *led us to believe* we should have not only their moral but their material support also." It is only too probable that they were led to believe all this; but whether they were led by their own fancies, by Dr Leyds' misrepresentations, or by diplomatic subtleties, is not so easy to ascertain. He goes on to complain that the Boers had every reason to believe that we should be attacked in Egypt by the great army of France, and that the population of India, suffering from plague and famine, would rebel and welcome an invasion from Russia. He is furious with Germany, whose conduct has been so bad that he dares not trust himself to speak of it — evidently implying that Germany had encouraged them to war, and then deserted them.

These complaints may or may not be ill-founded,—they probably are; but, at the same time, there is no doubt about the intense hostility which is expressed to Great Britain and everything British, coupled with this disclosure as to the relations subsisting between the most virulent national enemies we possess and the Liberal party. "We certainly overrated the power of the Liberal party in England, and were vilely misled by many prominent members of that party." This is an unpleasant sentence to read, having regard to the part which the Liberal party has played in bringing about these South African disasters by their Majuba capitulation, the correspondence which they have maintained with the enemy, and their protests against annexation and in favour of conciliatory and peaceful adjustment of disputes which con-

cerned our forcible ejectment from the country. Liberals are classed with French, Russians, and Germans in the mind of this ancient Boer as the common enemies of England. The results of the war and the elections have at least enabled us to regard the following expression of gratitude and hope with complete indifference: "I cannot omit to express our deepest gratitude to those large-hearted philanthropists who have been faithful to us in our direst adversity. And I can only hope that, as some of them have been already returned to the new Parliament, the whole of the Liberal party will be led by them, so that there may be some hope of the independence of our two republics at least being regained ultimately by some means or other." When an avowed enemy of the country can thus couple together foreign hostility and Liberal co-operation as the resources on which his compatriots relied, it is matter of the deepest thankfulness that the settlement in view will be carried into effect by the Unionist and not by the Liberal party.

It is unnecessary to say much upon this subject. Every one must feel that to have transferred the settlement of South Africa to the hands of those who, as a party, occupy the very ambiguous position just adverted to, and are also responsible for all that has happened in the past, would have been interpreted by the colonies, the Boers, and the loyalists as a virtual abandonment of the fruits of victory. Vacillation of purpose at such a crisis would have forfeited the respect of the colonies, would have alienated the loyalty of the loyal, and would have retarded the submission of the Boers by increasing its perils. Boers and natives alike have memories of a time when they submitted to English rule under the most solemn assurances that the arrangement was permanent, only to be roughly expelled from their fool's paradise by being handed back again to the rule of those who gloried in the treachery from which they suffered. The most cursory knowledge of English politics must assure them that their case has now been fully discussed, and all its circumstances of humiliation and wrong appreciated; and that the unalterable determination of the whole British Empire is that the two so-called South African republics shall hereafter form part of it, and shall be governed and administered free from all hostile intrusion, whether of Boer or Hollander. And when we read the account of Kruger's stealthy exit with his infamy and his cash from a country where his own burghers are ready to offer him personal violence, we cannot believe that a desire to recall him, or reestablish that sordid system of which he was the sordid representative, will be strong enough to be a source of unrest. The more turbulent Boers, if they survive, will have undergone the discipline of forced expatriation beyond the sea, and

of British military prisons, and will have gained wisdom from experience. Men of other races will be attracted to a well-governed country to settle there. The period of military government, and afterwards of Crown Colony government, will, we believe, at no very distant time cease to be necessary, and will give place to a self-government in which all white races will participate, and under which the natives will be secure.

The other feature of electoral discussion was the charge enforced by Sir W. Harcourt and Mr Morley, that our recent policy was throwing on the resources of Britain a burden greater than they can bear. It would be unreasonable to dismiss a grave charge of this kind as the pessimistic utterance, the Cassandra vaticination, of defeated politicians, dismayed by the accumulated consequences of their own very serious blunders. Mr Morley declares in his postscript manifesto that we are expanding our responsibilities beyond the limits of our resources; that the public burdens are growing perilously heavier; that giant rivals are slowly but surely springing up against us in all quarters of the world, while we are profligately squandering the treasure which we should be diligently husbanding. And he implores us to realise that we are not ending but only beginning, and that "perhaps the day is not remote when we shall even regret Lord Salisbury." He looks forward to an era of vapouring sentiment, when the sole aim will be to extend territorial dominion, when we shall forget "that the true key to national strength and prosperity is peace, low taxes, reduced debt, the advancement in comfort, skill, industry, and wellbeing of the people of these islands, the good-will of the world." He complains that we have been brought within sight of the prospect of a military conscription, of the loss of markets, and of the Powers who dislike us ceasing to fear us.

From the best consideration which we can give to this dismal foreboding, we think that the shortest way to convert this peace-loving people into an aggressive military people is to inflict upon it the sting of self-reproach, spurring it on to wipe away disgrace. Those who are responsible for the mingled cowardice and treachery involved in the desertion of Gordon and the capitulation after Majuba have temporarily dislodged from the British mind the conviction, which is usually a permanent one, that peace is the greatest of all British interests. If the British people are satisfied that their empire is being maintained, and their responsibilities fairly discharged instead of treacherously abandoned, the commercial spirit prevails, and all are in favour of peace. Their deep reluctance to engage in foolhardy or adventurous enterprises will even lead them for a time to yield a sombre acquiescence in the conduct of

Ministers who forget their duty. They are led thereto by distrusting their own knowledge of the circumstances, by a disposition to trust their statesmen. When the consequences unfold themselves, and they learn the position to which a misplaced confidence has reduced them, and find that supineness has nearly ruined their empire, all other considerations are temporarily thrown to the winds, and they insist with rare unanimity that, at whatever cost in men and money, the past shall be retrieved. The statesmen who have inflicted that past upon them are the men who are really responsible. The true lesson to be derived from the last twenty years is, that a Cabinet which palters with its responsibilities, which, to secure present ease, accepts future peril and disregards honour, is committing this country to a *rôle* which it will never accept, and from which it will, at whatever cost, insist upon being disentangled. The surest way of leading to a military conscription is so to accumulate surrounding perils, whether by disintegration at home or unworthy submission to foes abroad, as to render that measure necessary to our preservation.

The imperial issue was made the predominant factor in party politics by the action of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, and its furious condemnation by Mr Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speeches. For the moment, partly owing to the Afghan and Zulu wars following the firm opposition to Russia in rapid succession, the country wavered, and the elections of 1880 were wrongly interpreted. The foreign policy of the Cabinet of 1880-85 and its results have ensured Lord Beaconsfield's triumph. No sooner did the democracy discover that this alternative policy meant the abandonment of British interests in all parts of the world, and the repudiation of responsibilities in the fear that they would accumulate, than it recoiled from it. But the elections of 1880, and the tentative adoption of retiring and retreating schemes in obedience to a love of peace, show that reckless aggression has no charms for the very practical people who inhabit these islands. The passion of the British people is for successful commerce. In fulfilling it they have erected an empire. And the strongest proof that they have not been enervated by wealth or commercial activity is, that the moment the empire is shown to be imperilled, the innate love of peace is temporarily laid aside, and war is prosecuted with the utmost vigour. Unless the peril is real and imminent, this country will submit to a policy of pinpricks, will accept arbitrations which it knows will be prejudiced, will approve of compromises which it feels are one-sided. Perhaps, when Mr Morley talks of the time being not far distant when we shall even regret Lord Salisbury, he is at the same time

paying an indirect tribute to the patience and wisdom with which our foreign relations have been conducted during the last five years, and also to the trained self-control of the nation, which, he fears, is so suddenly to disappear. The only really foolhardy enterprise which has been urged upon this practical and hard-headed, even if enthusiastic, people during the last five years has been war with the Turkish Sultan, to avenge the wrongs of the Armenians. It was a recrudescence of the folly which rendered war between Russia and Turkey inevitable after the Bulgarian atrocities, and sought to enlist the sympathy of the British in encouragement of Russian aggression. But it was not in either case conduct for which the Imperialist and Unionist party were responsible. On the contrary, in either case they restrained the excitement and vapouring sentiment of the moment.

Where has this lust for extending territorial dominion at the expense of the wellbeing of the people been displayed by either the Ministry or the nation during the last five years? There has been no lack of prudential restraint in our dealings with China. No one credits us with a thirst for territorial dominion there: if Mr Morley really does so, let him look at our recent agreement with Germany. We adopt the purely defensive policy of upholding our commercial interests, and jointly endeavouring with others to uphold European honour in the matter of the treatment accorded to their legations. If others like to thrust their hands into a hornet's nest, there is no undue eagerness amongst ourselves to follow the example. There has been no recklessness that we can see, and no public desire for anything but the most prudent conduct, in relation to either Turkey or China, although the complications have been extensive, and afforded ample room if any vapouring sentiment required to be satisfied. So, too, in Venezuela, the whole country carried moderation and self-control to an extreme in order to avoid war, and was rewarded by the settlement in a satisfactory manner of a prolonged dispute. Has there been anything aggressive or vapouring in our relations with France? The vapouring has all been on the other side, the patience and self-control on our own. Not merely was the extraordinary claim put forward by M. Marchand at Fashoda quietly and effectively disposed of, but arrangements were made which settled on terms of compromise all conflicting claims of France and England in the Central Soudan, the region of the Niger, and elsewhere in West Africa. These compromises have all been founded on the principle of give and take, in which Great Britain has been very ready to give rather than lose a settlement. In former generations we have driven France out of Canada, India, and Egypt, and

there is no disposition to be other than generous and forbearing in our later dealings. So far from increasing the burdens of the country, recent policy has relieved us of very burdensome controversies both in America and Africa. It has closed a long-standing one with Venezuela and the United States; it has terminated a period of dangerous territorial rivalry between France and England in Western Africa; it has eliminated Hollander intrigue and Boer hostility from South Africa; and has secured an absolute and undisputed control over the destinies of Egypt. All these controversies, which, so long as they were undecided, were sources of peril, big with the possibilities of war, have been removed, and the burdens of this country have been proportionately lightened.

Nor is there any serious reason to expect that these results will be accompanied by any considerable increase to our financial burden. No war was ever more economically waged than that in the Soudan. Its management induces all who suspect that we do not carry on our military administration at home in a way which gives us full value for our money, to hope that to Lord Kitchener may be assigned an important part in the necessary work of reconstructing our services. If the South African war has cost a large sum, the revenues which will accrue to the conquerors will help to meet it; and it is well worth the expenditure, now that we emerge from it stronger than we ever were before, with character and prestige re-established in every quarter of the globe. It is the strongest guarantee of peace to show that we can at once transport a quarter of a million soldiers across 7000 miles of sea, and vindicate British authority over an enormous continent and most difficult country in the face of a brave and well-armed foe. So far from there being any substance in Mr Morley's complaint that "we are expanding our responsibilities beyond the limits of our resources," it seems to us that the very reverse has taken place. We have contracted our responsibilities by adjusting numerous outstanding disputes with the great Powers of the world, and by quelling foes within our midst who would have expelled us from South Africa and dissolved the Union with Ireland. We have increased our resources by the removal of urgent dangers and by the enthusiastic co-operation which we have received, and at length justified, at the hands of our whole colonial empire, including the loyalists of South Africa.

The sole cause of misgiving which the elections have afforded us is the disappearance for some time to come of that which has always been under our party system the best guarantee for prudent administration—viz., an organised Opposition and an alternative Ministry. Mid-Lothian cam-

paigns and the adoption of Home Rule have been the destruction of the Liberal party. Under evil influences one of the great political parties has taken the wrong side on two issues of vital importance — the unity of the kingdom at home, and the discharge of imperial responsibilities abroad: in other words, the maintenance of British interests outside these islands, at a time when the interests without are larger and more wide-reaching than the interests within. The present Opposition has chosen to place itself athwart the national destiny, in antagonism to the national will. It has saddled itself with a policy which it can never carry out without ruining the country, and which it cannot get rid of without ruining the party. So long as the swing of the pendulum theory seemed to be the law of electoral results, they might hope by prudence in office to minimise, amidst the reproaches of their rank and file, the effects of their radical errors in principle. But it is now established that the constituencies are capable of reaffirming with increased vigour of decision an earlier mandate. They understand the trend of events, and are determined that the empire shall be maintained, and that while it lasts its responsibilities shall be met and its duties discharged.

Will the Liberal party have the wisdom to survive the catastrophe of its self-love, recognise the decision of the country, and reorganise itself accordingly? When both parties are in accord as to the necessity of a common end, the means to that end, the alternative courses of action in particular circumstances, will afford ample occasion for party rivalry. If the real object of the Opposition is first to vindicate the empire, and next to secure that it be done in the most prudent and least burdensome and least violent manner, they would at all times command a hearing, and possibly at times profit by the mistakes of their opponents. But in that view, and for that purpose, it will be necessary for them to abjure their past, instead of vindicating it on principle. The Majuba surrender and the Gordon desertion have sunk deep into the heart of the country, and never again will she submit to the humiliation, or court the consequences, in the shape of those prolonged efforts, expenditure in blood and money, and portentous political risks, which we have just faced and surmounted.

It is difficult, and will be a work of time, for the Opposition to disencumber itself of the fatal legacy of its immediate past. It is satisfactory to find that more than two-thirds of its members are returned as Liberal Imperialists. Still there are the Little Englanders and the Irish Nationalists to reckon with. Their former ally, Mr Davitt, has just been illustrating the union of hearts policy by proposing to welcome Mr Kruger to the south of France or Holland with a malignant anti-British address from Irish pro-Boers, and to present this mean

and unworthy fugitive with the freedom of Dublin. That is a sad commentary on Liberal claims to public confidence. Nor will Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's declaration against any period of Crown Colony government in the annexed States improve their position. The only hope left to them is that the Boers may settle down quietly under the new British government; that this war, the outrageous system which led to it, and their own conduct in regard to it, may be consigned to oblivion; and that a new order of things may arise in which the once great Liberal party may make a fresh start.

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ARMY REORGANISATION.

TRAINING AND REDISTRIBUTION IN RELATION TO TRAINING AND TO MOBILISATION FOR WAR.

THE HOME ARMY.

VI. TRAINING.

THERE is no disguising the fact that the troops sent out from England to South Africa were not properly instructed in the duties required from soldiers in war. The large majority of the men in the battalions were reservists, called up after several years' absence from the colours; and owing to the fact that mobilisation took place in the early winter, when it was impossible to put them into camp, there was no opportunity of giving them even a short practical training. They were crowded into barracks under conditions that were very hard upon them, and all that could be done was to give them some preliminary and very partial instruction in musketry.

Happily for us, the troops which first encountered the enemy at Dundee, and formed the greater part of the garrison of Ladysmith, were those sent from India, where the army is really kept ready for war; and to these troops it is mainly due that the Boers did not completely overrun Natal and advance on Cape Colony. Nor have the reinforcements sent out from this country during the progress of the war been any better prepared than those hastily de-

spatched at the commencement of hostilities. The reason for this is not far to seek. In every garrison and station throughout the United Kingdom almost the entire staff has gone to South Africa: every non-commissioned officer that could possibly be spared has likewise gone, and the majority of the clerks in the several offices; so that, whilst the number of recruits has almost doubled, the machinery for their training has been wanting, and the training has, in fact, during the past year been little more than nominal. Our barracks have been crowded to excess with untrained men; but so great has been the demand in South Africa for all the material of war, that equipment has not been forthcoming for the "details"—*i.e.*, the men from whom are taken the drafts required to fill the vacancies in the fighting line.

Common-sense would suggest that the training staff should not only be kept complete, but should even be increased in time of war, so that the training of recruits should be made as thorough as possible: as a matter of fact, the very contrary has been the case, and the recruits for the regular army have been attached to the Militia battalions, which were themselves under-officered and in need of training.

For the past twelve months we have been engaged in an offensive war in South Africa; but in Great Britain we have not modified our system one iota, and have rigidly adhered to our defensive plan for fear of exceeding the estimates. We have worked throughout on the assumption that the war would be over before the end of the summer, and have done nothing to increase our barrack accommodation beyond providing the huts necessitated by the actual addition of a certain number of batteries and battalions to our army. The financial branch of the War Office, acting under the orders of the Treasury, has cut down the home expenditure in every possible way, while that connected with South Africa has been conducted in a lavish manner. The consequence has been that during the past year we have had to conduct the training of our recruits and militia without the buildings or the staff necessary to its efficiency. In the matter of home training we have lost a year of valuable time, and we shall require a large expenditure to replace matters at the depots and elsewhere on the footing that existed in October 1899.

Had we adopted a general offensive policy for the whole of our army, whether at home, in India, or the colonies, such a state of affairs could not have arisen: some attempt must have been made to remedy the defects of the system at home and to keep the machinery in working order, as well as to provide what was required for the army in the field. What we really need, and what must in future be secured, is that the troops on the home establishment should be thoroughly trained for war, so as to be ready should occasion arise to

meet a European army in the field. To this end the annual scheme of training, whatever it may be, must be carried on continuously throughout the year: the units to be trained, whether companies, battalions, batteries, brigades, or divisions, must be complete in themselves, with their proper complement of officers, the staff being the same that would be employed in war. Each district command should be prepared to contribute its brigade or division to the field army, wherever it may be called upon to concentrate, whether at home or abroad. The ports of embarkation for the troops from each military district should be agreed upon, and the whole local machinery should be so adjusted in peace-time that it may be ready at any season of the year to mobilise and despatch without delay the proportion of troops allotted from it for the two Army Corps which we are even now supposed to hold ready for war.

The purpose of all military training is to secure thorough efficiency for war. It must start with the individual recruit, and go on to the company and battalion to which he belongs — after which the brigade or division composed of trained units must be brought together, and be still further trained as a united machine. In order that the training should be successful, two things are essential — first, that the training should be continuous; and, secondly, that the establishment of each unit should be complete in itself.

In a previous paper it has been already pointed out how the action of the Budget leads to the reduction of establishments in the home army; but it is necessary to go further into detail to explain how under the present system each separate unit of the army is always incomplete, and therefore unable to carry out the training required of it. For years past the army has been working with a reduced establishment of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, with the result that a shifting of units and individuals has taken place such as must completely defeat any attempt at continuous training: while, owing to the annual demand made on the whole of our home battalions to supply drafts for India, no single company possesses the same men in October that it did in April, and never do the same company officers remain with the company throughout the year.

Company training begins as a rule in April, and is really the most useful work the soldier does during the year, the greatest possible effort being made to carry it out thoroughly: in the cavalry and artillery, training by squadrons or divisions of batteries is similarly carried out.

When company training is ended, battalion training is begun, but this cannot be carried out in anything like the same complete way, owing to the large number of men employed in fatigue duties, orderly duties, &c.; while the absence of others at the courses of instruction at

Aldershot, Hythe, Shoeburyness, and other schools still further reduces the number on parade, no allowance being made for this drain on the establishment. It is surprising that, with a strength so much reduced, the battalion or regiment accomplishes what it does. When battalions are assembled in brigade the numbers dwindle still further. So great is the evil, that commanding officers have ceased to fight against it, and there is no remedy for it but a careful revision of the system, so that our establishments may be kept complete.

If the training of recruits at the depot, as already recommended, were adopted, and they were made to join the battalion at stated periods, their training and that of the battalion might be so arranged that unnecessary repetition of work would be avoided: if, further, the drafts required for India and the colonies were trained at the depot and kept there till it was time for them to go abroad, the drain on the units of our home army, and the consequent reduction of establishments and constant disturbance of the regimental system, would be avoided. A further step in the right direction would be taken by the extension to the whole army of the experiment initiated by the War Office last autumn, in connection with the garrison artillery, by which reservists and pensioners are employed to perform certain duties hitherto carried out by men on the establishment. The duties referred to are classed as semi-military ones, and include those of messengers (in lieu of orderlies), clerks, caretakers, library and institute assistants, conservancy men, and mess-servants, with wages varying from 23s. to 18s. 6d. The men are provided with a suitable uniform, and may if convenient be accommodated in barracks. By such a step a large number of soldiers will be set at liberty to perform their proper military work; but care must be taken that certain duties which rightly belong to soldiers in the field, such as cooks, officers' servants, &c., remain as military duties, and are performed by men belonging to the regiments, battalions, and batteries of our field army.

Assuming that, by the adoption of some such measures as above indicated, the units of our home army are kept at their complete establishment, and that the depots are made capable of accommodating 1000 men, with militia barracks for 500 men in the neighbourhood; and that the staff necessary for training such a body of men is provided, as well as drill-halls, gymnasia, lecture-rooms, and all else necessitated by modern requirements,—we may go on to consider what changes are needed in the *system* of training our home army.

The system at present in force is good enough in theory, and if it could be thoroughly and continuously carried out, might lead to excellent results. But its radical defect is its want of continuity, for as a matter of fact it can under

present conditions be carried on during only six months of the year. Continental nations have long ago recognised the fact that war may break out at any season of the year, and that if their armies are to be in a condition to take the field whenever required, their training must be continuous. We, on the contrary, assume apparently that we shall only go to war in the summer, and we make the winter months a period of leave for both officers and men, "carrying on" as best we can with an establishment reduced to the lowest point, and our regiments, battalions, and batteries attenuated to a degree that is quite ludicrous.

It is impossible to overstate the unsettling influences of such a system; and it would be far better to calculate on a certain percentage of officers and men being on leave throughout the year, leaving it to the commanding officer and the general to decide how such leave should be taken within the prescribed limits, so that the efficiency of the unit is not endangered, nor the completeness of its establishment for the purposes of training disturbed. It might also be arranged that men should be transferred to the reserve every three months only, batches of men from the depot, to replace casualties, being received at the same time, so that the number of men necessary to carry out the training should always be kept up.

Another disturbing element in our system arises from the constant changes among the officers, both regimental and on the staff, which interferes most seriously with the efficiency and continuity both of army training and of the district work generally. In such a service as ours, exchanges and moves must inevitably occur; but while greater latitude might be permitted to individuals in exercising freedom of choice for particular corps or particular stations, some fixed periods for exchanges and moves should be adopted, and they should not be allowed to interfere with the continuity of training. The commencement of the annual training should be fixed for the 15th October, and should be continued throughout the winter months, so that squadron, company, or division training should be completed by April 15, when training by regiment, battalion, or battery should commence. This might be continued till July 15, when a month should be devoted to training in brigade or division — the remaining weeks of the year being available for manœuvres. The changes among regimental and staff officers, already alluded to, might well be fixed to take place at the conclusion of the training season.

The foregoing principles being adopted, the next thing is to determine that each general officer in command should superintend the training of all troops in his command, to whatever branch of the service they may belong, and that the men and officers serving under him should be able to attend courses of instruction, and to

obtain certificates of proficiency in all necessary subjects, within the military district. Instruction in gunnery, musketry, signalling, and engineering (so far as making field-works and shelters) should form part of the training, for the efficiency of which in all ranks and all arms of the service under his command a general should be held personally responsible. For this purpose it is necessary that each general should have at his disposal a manœuvring area for the brigade and divisional exercises, as well as suitable training-grounds in the immediate neighbourhood of each garrison, and that he should have the funds necessary to enable him to carry out the manœuvres. When a certain sum has been allotted to him for this purpose, he should not be hampered in the details of its expenditure by War Office checks, though of course his accounts should be in due course submitted for audit.

Only when troops have been thoroughly trained locally under their own commanders as complete units, and can be accompanied by their own commanders and the staff with which they have worked, should they receive the further training that may be imparted at large manœuvres, where the education of commanders and staff should be a matter of serious work, and should be carried out on a regular system.

The nation has grasped the idea that manœuvres on a large scale are necessary, and that the concentration of troops for training is a matter of importance. A large area of ground has been acquired for the purpose, and large sums expended, but the result has been of comparatively little value, on account of the lack of system. A large number of units have been brought together from every part of Great Britain to represent an Army Corps, without any regard to their completeness or to their having been trained in brigades and divisions. The regular and militia battalions have had on an average a strength of less than 500 men, and have been in no sense trained units, and therefore unfit to profit by the advantages of manœuvres on a large scale. A very large number of staff officers have been employed, individual officers attending at considerable personal expense in order to obtain experience; but, owing to the defects in the system, they have had but little real training.

As a result, the manœuvres have borne but little resemblance to the real business of war, and have been little more than serious play in which commanders have lost and won reputations: at the same time, they have seriously interfered with the training of troops locally in every part of the army at home, and have misled the country as to the capacity of the troops for real warfare.

A large part of the failure has been due, no doubt, to the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer: sufficient money has never been provided to

enable the manœuvres of an Army Corps to be carried out properly; but they have been attempted on a sum which would have been sufficient for divisional manœuvres—with the natural result that the country has not got value for its money.

There is one more point in the future training of the army to be noted. The Volunteers have taught us how training may be carried on after dark, and by the erection of large well-lighted drill-halls have pointed the way to a great improvement and development of our present system. Hitherto army training has been restricted to the hours of daylight, and soldiers have been left to occupy themselves as best they can from tea-time to bed-time, and, for lack of proper buildings and proper light, they have been led to seek amusement at the canteen or in public-houses. Provide them with drill-halls and suitable recreation-rooms lighted with electric light, and we can at once carry on preliminary drills, gymnastics, evening school, lectures, &c., after dark; valuable time will be gained for training, and the moral effect will be enormous.

We must not, however, go too closely into details, as we are arguing for principles. These, to be brief, are—(1) The establishment of all units of the home army to be kept complete, in view of their regular and continuous training, such training to be localised, up to the point when brigades and divisions are brought together as an assembly of completely trained units. (2) The staff of general officers commanding, as well as of subordinate commanders and of schools of instruction, to be changed as little as possible; such changes as are absolutely necessary taking place at fixed times when they will cause the least disturbance to the system. (3) Branch schools of instruction to be established in each command, to enable certificates to be obtained locally (4) The men required to make up the drafts for battalions abroad not to be borne on the strength of the home battalions, and their training to be carried out at the depots, where also all recruits should be detained until they attain the age of twenty. (5) Militia training to be carried out at the headquarters of regimental districts, and to be similar to that adopted for the regular forces. (6) Volunteer training to be strictly localised, Volunteer battalions being restricted to taking part in divisional manœuvres, on the manœuvre area of the district command. (7) Army manœuvres to be regarded as a special opportunity for the training of several divisions and the formation of an Army Corps, as well as for the practical instruction and exercise of the higher staff: such manœuvres to take place once in three years only, but divisional training to be carried out on the local manœuvring areas annually. After-dark training of troops to be recognised as a new feature in the life of our soldiers, leading to a distinctly moral as well as pro-

fessional improvement. (8) Decentralisation and complete delegation of authority and responsibility by the War Office to the general intrusted with the command of a district, to whom financial authority within certain limits should also be given—an officer of the financial branch of the War Office being appointed to his staff for the purpose of carrying out the necessary regulations.

VII. REDISTRIBUTION IN RELATION TO TRAINING AND TO MOBILISATION FOR WAR.

The extraordinary development of the facilities of communication during the last thirty years has affected every department of our national life, but it is not perhaps generally recognised how great has been its influence on our military administration. In regard to the home army, it has led to a complete centralisation of all authority and responsibility at the War Office, thereby accentuating many of the evils which it has been our avowed object to remove. The real advantages of localisation, and of the territorial system, have been lost sight of, although in civil life we continue to retain and to develop the county organisation which has been so characteristic a feature of our national life since the days of the Saxon kings.

It is not easy to trace exactly how the present division of Great Britain and Ireland into military districts has been arrived at; but the boundaries of the territorial areas follow those of the counties, and each military district is intimately connected with the administration of the counties comprised in it. The result of the policy of centralisation already spoken of is that the entire home army is administered from the War Office. The general officers nominally in command have little real authority, units and even detachments of units, as well as individuals, being removed from their control without their being consulted; every trifling detail has to be referred to the War Office for orders, and in matters of expenditure they are so restricted as to leave no room for the exercise of any discretion or responsibility. The evil grows constantly, in spite of every effort to overcome it, and during the past year, while we have been at war, it has been carried to such a pitch as to paralyse all local or individual action on the part of district commanders, and has defeated every purpose, not excepting the economy which is its main object.

If we are really to be prepared for war, and if the plan of training and administration of the home army is to be framed with that object, a radical change must be made in this respect: a large measure of decentralisation must be conceded, and general officers must be given some real independence and responsibility.

The establishment of the home army is designed to provide three Army Corps, two completely equipped for war, and one in reserve, and it has already been shown that to allow of such a force being held in readiness and efficiency, each portion of it — whether a brigade, a division, or a larger section—must be kept for purposes of training complete and distinct with its own staff. The commander of each of the larger units should be one who would be employed in that capacity in actual war, and he should in time of peace be held responsible for the thorough training of his command, and for its readiness to embark at any season of the year and to concentrate wherever needed at home or abroad. The general officer commanding a district which is to provide one or more divisions of the field army should have full control over the whole of the troops in his command, and subordinate commanders should each in their own sphere be given real responsibility and independence.

Keeping this end in view, we would suggest that the eleven military districts in Great Britain should be divided into two groups, one containing the Scottish district, with the North-western and North-eastern districts, the other the remaining eight districts of England, thus forming two large separate commands, while Ireland would form a third. Each of these should be placed under the control of a general officer deemed qualified to command an army corps in the field, and each should be prepared to furnish 20,000 infantry, with the proper proportion of troops of the other arms to a fighting force. The carrying out of this idea would necessitate a new distribution of troops throughout the country. At present the bulk of our home army is quartered in the southern counties, so as to be ready to resist invasion; but with our unrivalled means of communication this is really unnecessary, and would be still more so if our whole army were held ready to take the field and to concentrate at any point where it may be needed, thus utilising to the full all the different lines of railway.

The details of such redistribution would have to be worked out before the sites for the additional barracks (which, as al ready noted, will be required) are decided upon; but the existence of barracks in unsuitable localities should not hamper us in our scheme. Such barracks are to be found in cities and towns where the presence of troops was formerly considered necessary as affording aid to the civil power, and the sites being now very valuable, may be disposed of to advantage, or exchanged for agricultural land in the neighbourhood as may be found best.

The advantages to be expected from such a redistribution are numerous. In the first place, it would enable us to make the territorial idea a reality, by quartering the territorial battalions in their own districts, to the marked ad-

vantage of recruiting. All authorities on recruiting are agreed that, to make our system a success, troops must be maintained in the districts from which we expect to draw men, and that our soldiers must take part in the national life: they must be seen everywhere, and some good should result to localities from their presence.

General officers in command being made responsible for all matters affecting the troops, they would be able to arrange for all contracts to be carried out locally, and the housing and supply of the troops could thus be made in every sense a source of gain to the neighbourhood. Municipalities and parish councils would then become interested in the welfare of the troops, and the patriotism and sympathy with soldiers so clearly evinced by the people when war is declared would be kept alive by the actual presence of soldiers in their midst.

The advantages that would be gained by having a sufficient number of troops in different parts of the country to enable them to be trained as complete brigades and divisions have already been dwelt upon, and there would be the further advantage of being able to utilise for manœuvring and training purposes the many suitable areas, giving every variety of ground, which are to be found in different parts of the country.

One word more with regard to mobilisation. The details of any scheme, as well as of all proposals relating to our national defences, must of necessity be kept secret, and cannot be discussed in the public press. It may, however, be pointed out that so long as our home army is organised solely with a view to defending our own shores, we can do no more than arrange for holding troops in readiness to take part in a prearranged scheme. That this is the fact is well known on the Continent, and the knowledge would enable any nation purposing to invade us to adopt methods to defeat our plan, and so work out their scheme of operations without our being able to counteract it. Whereas if we adopt the principle of being always ready to put an army in the field, our enemies will have to be prepared to meet attack themselves. We have only to organise our army on the offensive principle, and to make our plan of mobilisation one for offence and not purely for defence, to ensure that we should never have to put it in force for the latter purpose, for that attitude will paralyse our enemies and effectually prevent their attempting the invasion of our islands.

In the foregoing pages no reference has been made to the reorganisation of the cavalry or artillery: the training of the infantry of the home army has alone been dwelt upon. The reason of this is, that the *principles* are the same for all branches of the service, and it is for principles alone that we contend. Nor has anything been said on such subjects as the place to be occupied by the Yeomanry in any future system, or of the relations in which

the forces in our Colonies may stand to the British army in the scheme of imperial defence. The question of what changes are necessary in our field-guns, or in the training of our soldiers as marksmen or as scouts, have not been touched upon. On these and many other points we have learnt much from our South African experiences; but the lessons to be deduced from these experiences will need to be carefully considered by those competent to speak with authority before the necessary reforms can be properly formulated. The nation feels confident that when Lord Roberts returns these things will be taken in hand. It is certain that they will involve large expenditure, and the country is probably ready to accept the sacrifice in the hope and belief that by so doing it will obtain a really efficient army. The object of the present writer is to point out some radical defects in our present system of training and administration, being absolutely convinced that unless these defects are remedied, all attempts at reform in other directions, and all increase of expenditure, will in the end prove unavailing.

The root of the whole matter is—the assumption of the offensive policy for our home army.

It is for the nation, through its parliamentary representatives, to decide whether it will consent to adhere to a policy of pure defence, which means defeat, or whether it will assert its right to have its army reorganised on the basis of an offensive principle, meaning true preparation for war, and the certainty of maintaining peace.

WITH PLUMER TO THE RELIEF OF MAFEKING.

BY

ONE OF HIS TROOPERS.

To be able to judge of the manner in which Colonel Plumer's task was performed, one must first realise its magnitude. A due appreciation has been hitherto denied him, owing partly to his own modesty, but more particularly to the fact that no correspondent to any well-known paper was with the staff of the northern column during the war. His task was, briefly, to preserve the integrity of Rhodesia by holding the long line of frontier from Mafeking to Tuli; to harass the rear of the north-western Boer army, and prevent them from pushing home their attack on Mafeking; and finally, if possible, to relieve that town and release the force imprisoned there.

To effect these objects, he had for an army a column nominally something over a thousand strong—actually reduced by sickness and the unavoidable requirements of a line of communications to a force of less than 600 rifles. Of these at least a tenth were continuously dismounted, owing to the ravages of that curse of South Africa, the horse sickness. For artillery he had the antiquated mule-guns, firing black powder, of the British South African Police—awe-inspiring weapons no doubt to the untutored Matabele, but ridiculously inadequate when confronted with the modern breechloaders, firing smokeless powder, with which the Boers were armed. For officers he had, with the exception of a small but efficient nucleus, men without any knowledge of organisation, discipline, tactics, or drill, who had to learn these elements of soldiering by experience and in the face of the enemy. Grim words these, with a meaning that is liable to be overlooked in the modern enthusiasm for untaught soldiers, but which came home in unmistakable clearness to many in the ranks—misled to death at Crocodile Pools and Ramathlabama. For non-commissioned officers — the backbone of the British, but, with a few brilliant exceptions, the weakness of the Rhodesian army—he had to depend for the most part on old soldiers whose military career had been, for very apparent reasons, a failure, or else on untrained and untried educated volunteers, who had little or no authority with the men under them. Lastly, he had in the ranks as heterogeneous and unruly a pack as any captain of free lances in the Hundred Years' War.

Such were his tools. Nor did circumstances render his undertaking the easier. With an inferior force, in flat, open, and indefensible country, he had to operate against an enemy obstinately defensive, immeasurably superior in strength and armament,

and naturally intrenched behind impregnable mountains and roadless bush. On his side, a long, weak, and concave front, with the railway, his chief line of communication, outside the arc; on theirs, a strong salient, with secure and perfectly defended interior lines. Behind him a treasury depleted and a desert country, famine-struck by the closure of communication with the south. Behind them the garden of the Transvaal, and uninterrupted access to all their bases of supply. A difficult problem, yet one that was successfully solved.

Like hounds hanging on the ears and flanks of a boar, distracting him and preventing him from driving home his attack on the hunter, Plumer kept his little force always on the flanks and rear of the opposing army, and effectually prevented the Boer leaders from giving their undivided attention to the subjugation of Mafeking. He seized every opportunity to harass, to menace, or attack, and on each and every occasion when his column was too deeply involved with an overwhelmingly superior force, he extricated it with little loss and with a skill beyond all praise. He preserved British territory all but inviolate, and, when reinforced by Carrington's Canadians and Queenslanders, joined hands with Mahon, and with him effected the relief of the besieged town. The smallness of his casualty list does him the greater credit, and bears testimony to the tenacity with which he adhered to the true *raison d'être* of his force as a strategical unit, namely, its continued existence as an active factor in the war. Would he have deserved better of his country if, in an engagement to the death, he had, like Leonidas, sacrificed himself with his tiny band, and thus abandoned Mafeking to its fate and left Rhodesia open and defenceless to the Boers?

THE CAMP.

It is morning in May, and as we approach Sefetili the road before us shows as a half-defined fulvous streak against the tawny green of the long undulating veldt grass. The same monotone of colour, hardly relieved by the darker olive of the scattered clumps of bush, stretches away to where the steely blue of the sky meets the veldt in a sharp hard line, without blending of tone or mellowness of distance. Eyes that look out upon this prospect glow with the exhilarating sense of illimitable freedom—of free air and space—or cloud with the depression of its unending sameness, and the sense it brings of utter isolation and detachment.

We half climb, half skirt another ridge, and like the flash of a silver shield a half-dried *vlei* on the right reflects the blaze of the South African sun. The road curves round its margin and breasts the slope beyond. As the gaze follows its course the camp breaks upon the view. The

grass has vanished there, and low down upon the shoulders of the slope the blue grey soil is scored with lines of tethered horses. Higher and to the right we can make out splotches of brown ranged in less rigid lines. These are the troopers' blanket shelters nestling under the lee of every scrap of bush. Interspersed are larger masses of grey—lengths of sail-cloth these, covering Government stores. Under the crest of the hill is a double series of hardly distinguishable horizontal lines meeting in angles, salient or re-entrant as they follow the contour of the hill. These signal to a soldier's eye intrenchments. Highest of all shines white in the sunlight the canvas of the commanding officer's tent, the orderly-room, and the officers' mess. These are the only tents.

Let us approach nearer.

Here are the horses tethered by their head-riems in double rows to ropes stretched taut between two posts. Shaggy, under-sized, under-conditioned, coarse-jointed, and with heavy pendent heads though they be, they can carry 18 stone over thirty miles of rough country, and be fit for work the following day. Near them, his rifle between his crossed legs, his arms resting limply on his knees, sits on a tussock of grass the sentry of the stable-guard, and sleepily watches the wreaths of blue smoke as they curl upwards from the pipe between his lips. He has not shaved for a month, and his ablutions have been, to say the least of it, perfunctory. On the back of his head rests a tattered and shapeless apology for the colonial flap-hat we have learnt to know so well. He has no coat, and his grey army shirt—the sleeves rolled up above the elbows and the neck turned in to the breast-bone—exposes his hairy and sun-tanned skin. From his belt hangs beside his bayonet the inevitable bag of Transvaal tobacco. A leather bandolier crosses his shoulder; while boots, innocent of brush or blacking, and breeches and putties that may once have been khaki, complete his apparel. The switch dangling from the listless right hand is for purposes of discipline, for the unpicketed heels of his charges are only too prone to take each and every opportunity of beating a tattoo on the ribs of their nearest neighbour.

Similar but unarmed figures recline in every attitude of repose wherever a morsel of shade provides shelter from the already scorching sun—a few with the rare and much-prized periodical or book, a few with needle and thread, fewer still engaged in the desultory cleaning of arms and accoutrements, which is all that is required on active service; the greater number, however, with hands and minds alike unoccupied, lazily quiescent—waiting. The impression of universal rest is accentuated, not disturbed, by the contrast of the darker colouring and more nondescript clothing of the Kaffir boys—squatting now, for the most part, by the fires, and pre-

paring the scanty rations for their masters' mid-day meal.

Suddenly into the somnolent semi-silence breaks the blare of the trumpet.

"Orderly sergeants?" queries a voice. "What's that for? No parade to-day, is there?"

"No; I don't think so," comes the answer. "Anyhow, we'll soon see."

He is right. Once again the trumpet calls the "Advance." With a curse each recumbent figure gets to his feet and strolls over to the squadron parade-ground, in readiness for the inevitable "Fall in for orders."

"What's up?" is the question on every lip; but as yet there is no answer.

The orderly sergeants return.

"We march at one. Five days' rations. Twenty pounds of kit per man to be on the waggons by 12.30, one hundred rounds of ammunition to be carried in the haversack, besides the full bandolier. Hurry up there, men, it's past eleven now."

In a few seconds the camp has become a hurrying ant-hill. One is collecting his blankets from the bushes, where they have been hanging to recover from the heavy dew of the night before; another views with dismay his heap of apparently all absolutely necessary impedimenta as he remembers the stern restriction of 20 lb. inclusive weight. Here the members of a mess are holding an animated discussion as to what constitutes the fair share of the common stock which each member can be called upon to carry, while there an impressed party of fatigue men are impatiently vituperating all set in authority over them as they stagger under the loads of ammunition-boxes which they must carry to the various squadron issuers for distribution before they are free to attend to their own concerns. Yet through and under all the hubbub and the hurry sounds clear the note of interrogation, "Is it Mafeking at last?"

The camp is very weary of these reconnaissances in force, followed by inevitable and precipitate retreat so soon as the overwhelming superiority of the Boers in numbers and guns has again become manifest. Their minds go back to the disastrous day at Ramathlabama, when they were all but surrounded by a force ten times their strength, and when the futile yapping of their little 7-pounders, firing black powder and impossible to mask, had proved so miserably inadequate against the heavier metal of the enemy, sending their messages of death from positions it was wellnigh impossible to locate. They think again of that night-retreat when, after a long day's fighting in the blistering South African sun, they were compelled to march back those weary forty miles with never a halt. Not utterly inexcusable if some of the weaker spirits had thought, "Better the tender mercies of the Boer than this nightmare of utter weariness and cold, of hunger and of drouth."

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Now, it is true, there are some grounds of hope. They have the Queenslanders, and the Canadians with their new guns — impressive monsters compared with their former mountain-toys. They are stronger too in numbers — numbering now all but a thousand strong — men lean and hardened by reverses and scanty fare. Besides, there had been rumours in the camp of a southern relieving force, and some had thought only two afternoons ago they had heard the deep dull boom of guns from where Mafeking, some forty miles to the southward, still stretched imploring arms for succour.

No time now for conjecture. Kits are packed and passed, a hasty mouthful of food is swallowed, and then the troops are massed to take their places in the line of march.

Last of all march down the waggon-escort—all those unhorsed by the agency of wounds or the African horse-sickness, and yclept "the dismounted squadrons." At last the sullen disappointment of the spectators, the remnant left behind, and comprising a small camp garrison and those medically unfit to go, finds vent in words of ironic comment—

"Poor chaps, they can't ride now, they've got to walk."

"*You* can't even walk," sounds back the retort courteous.

The laurels of the encounter rest with the latter, for there is no reply.

Then, after much Kaffir and English objurgation, bellowing of oxen, cracking of whips, and galloping to and fro of orderlies, the long column takes the road. And as the rumbling of the waggons and the guns is heard no more, the evening shades draw in, and the camp is wrapped again in silence and quiescence.

THE MARCH.

Here the soil is more sandy, the patches of bush are less dense, and the long veldt grass grows only in tussocks interspersed with low, woody shrubs. Instead of the bright glare of sunlight, the soft white radiance of the setting moon lights up a road stretched like a silver ribbon crossed and barred with designs in black velvet shadows. All is still but, in the bush, the mechanical unceasing whirr of the cicada, and from the open the long-drawn funereal note of the jackal's elegy—all is motionless, except where some slinking noiseless form crosses a moonlit open space of sand, or where the heavy-winged and silent owl shows black against the illuminated sky as it flits past in its nocturnal search for prey.

Then a faint, far-off murmur makes itself heard, resolving itself into a long rumble, like the spent thunder of a retreating storm—now, however, continuous and growing in volume and intensity. Then, on the far verge to the north and east,

where the last undulation of the veldt meets the blue, luminous grey of the sky, the black shadow of a horseman is silhouetted for an instant sharp and clear, ere he descends, to be now lost, now dimly seen amongst the shifting lights and shadows of the veldt. Then, to right and left, another and another comes into view, to sink again like the first into half-discerned obscurity, until some twenty shadowy forms are moving in a ragged line over a mile or more of front. These are the scouts of the advanced-guard. Soon a serried mass of cavalry blots for a longer interval the spot where the silver band of the road is cut by the sky-line, while the clink of stirrup-irons and the dull thud of horse-hoof and carbine-bucket strikes the ear. Now the long continuous rumble is alternated in intervals of greater and less intensity, and in the foreground of sound is noted the pistol-like crack of the long ox-whip, the clash of the trek-chain, or more rarely the outraged bellow of some protesting beast—a recruit to the yoke. Another few minutes and the first gun of the main column has topped the rise, followed soon by others, and by a continuous line of waggons, until the eye grows weary with tracing back the long, sinuous line of straining oxen and pitching waggons—the ships of the African wilderness.

Mark the men, too, as they file past. Recruited from all parts and classes of the empire, they have answered to the mother country's call to arms.

Mark the scouts—Colonials for the most part—bred and born upon the veldt. Bearded, lean, long-limbed centaurs, with faces bronzed and set, their gaze, from long looking out on lonely nature, steadfast and wary as of mariners, for to them too there is possibility of danger in every variation of a prospect.

Note the Queenslanders, tall and broad and burly. Very lions in the fight, though rough and unruly on the march, and on distasteful garrison duty. They are ideal heavy-weight irregular cavalry when fighting is frequent, and intervals of inaction short and rare. In spite of their weight, they are better horsemen across rough country than the best of the Afrikanders.

Then the Canadian gunners, smaller and lither, and darker. Soon, when for the first time they come under fire, to prove how admirable is their training, and how perfect their discipline and steadiness. This in face of the disadvantage that they have untried mules to draw their guns, instead of their own trained and handled horses.

Most numerous of all are the various Rhodesian corps. Men of all classes ride side by side. A volunteer aristocrat next a jail-bird from the coast ports; an electrical engineer at the elbow of a Cornish miner; a public school and university ne'er-do-well knee to knee with a steady old colonial who cannot write his own name. Some have been drawn and some driven here. Who looks for motives? Honour, patriotism, adventure, gain, or fear of worse than the mere prospect

of death — each has its adherents; but all are invested with a very real dignity by the cause in which they fight, and by the ever-present nearness of eternity.

As the column slowly winds across the veldt, the blue and silver livery of the night gives reluctant place to the grey and silver of the forerunner of the dawn. The column has marched, with one short halt, for thirty miles, and by the cold grey light we see more clearly, above the blue collars of their cloaks, the faces of the troopers, wan and pinched with cold and want of sleep, and note the hanging heads and stumbling footsteps of the cattle. We see, too, the sagging shoulders, the footsore, uneven strides, of the dismounted squadrons, as they march without cloak or coat on each side of the waggons and the road. They have marched, heavily weighted, first in the heat and dust of the afternoon at the tail of a long column, and later through the bitter cold of the night, picking, by the deceitful light of the moon, a path between the bushes and the pitfalls of the open veldt. Theirs the severest task, nobly endured.

Gradually the grey had given place to rose, and the rose to the golden splendour of the risen sun, and still the column crawled slowly on. Then comes a check. Wearily those at the end of the column conjecture as to its cause. Some word or order is being passed down the line.

"What?" "What did he say?" "What's that?"

"We have joined hands with the southern relieving column, and we are going to halt. Jan-massibi's is over the next rise."

A hoarse cheer greets the tidings. All listlessness has vanished. Some one attempts whistling a march, — "The Soldiers of the Queen," — a dozen join in, and with as swinging a stride as if they had only marched a mile, the tail of the column — the dismounted squadrons—swings up the rise and into Jan-massibi's kraal to a well-earned repose.

THE ENGAGEMENT.

The following dawn sees the now combined relieving forces again on the march, no longer in one long column of route, but with a tripartite head like the three prongs of a trident, the ambulance and transport forming the shaft. The bush has been growing thinner, the grass sparser and shorter, until now the veldt opens out in bare slopes of sun-dried yellow herbage, except where in the depression to the westward a greener line marks the course of the Malopo winding its way south to Mafeking. A trebled advance-guard rides a mile or two in front, for at any moment our troops may come into contact with the six thousand or so of Boers who, it is said, hold Mafeking invested.

The sun has passed the

meridian by an hour when it is decided to water the cattle and collect the troops for what may be to some their last meal on earth. The columns close up on the advance-guard and halt. The troops, caked and streaked with sweat and sandy dust, break off and hurry to collect the scanty wood and water, in readiness for the arrival of the waggons. Gradually these latter lumber up, and having found their respective units, proceed to outspan and unload. A few unfortunates are detailed to guard the cattle and horses at watering and grazing, while the remainder pursue and capture their errant domestic staff, and then stretch themselves in luxurious ease on the least hard and nobbly portions of ground, to savour all the delights of anticipation as they watch the manipulation by the Kaffir boys of the canteen or patrol-tin which contains the elements of dinner. Blessed word—the true interest and significance of which is a sealed book except to those who have sojourned, as these, months long in the wilderness.

Dinner is all but ready. Indeed, in a few cases, the difficult task of apportioning the messes already undertaken, when a certain languid interest is aroused by the sight of a vedette or two galloping in from the front. "Relieved for scoff!"[1] I suppose, is the general conjecture, and the preparation of dinner, the absorbing interest of the day, again claims entire attention.

Whizz-ee-oo-Boom! A shell passes over their heads and bursts in a little column of dust against the opposing hill-slope, half a mile to the rear.

"Pack up! Stand to your arms!" rings out in the hoarse voice of command, and the dream of food and repose is ended. Somehow the bullocks are driven in and inspanned—somehow the kits packed up and loaded on to the waggons—the hubbub punctuated the while at recurring intervals by the whistle of other shells.

The waggons have drawn off, and now, following downward in a long line the course of a dried-up spruit, are seeking shelter in the depression of its bed. The rank and file formed up on the crest look back and watch each pursuing shell as it bursts successively nearer the madly straining line. The Boers are aiming at the transport and the ambulance,—it may be with intent to cripple us, and destroy our mobility; it may be because the heavy waggons offer a better target than does the thin, hardly discernible, khaki line in front.

So far there is no reply from our guns; but every officer, his glasses glued to his eyes, is looking for that flash—so faint in the bright sunlight—which alone will serve to locate the masked batteries of our invisible foe.

"Look to the right of that big bush across the valley; I think I saw it there."

Supposition becomes certainty, and to the only long-range gun of the British South

[1] Scoff = food.

African Police falls the honour of first returning the enemy's salute. Then the positions of other guns of the enemy are marked, and the Royal Horse Artillery and Canadians join in the chorus, blending the separate detonations into one bass roar.

A mounted officer gallops to where, close by the guns, the dismounted squadrons are lying in readiness — already formed for the attack. In response a dotted grey and khaki line is moving down the slope in front of the guns. They have hardly crossed the brow when they are in a hail of fire. A man looks back to whistle up his terrier, and his lips are still pursed in the call when his dog vanishes into empty air. A little blood upon the herbage, too far away to be distinguished, is all there is to indicate his fate. He must have met one of the larger shells upon his way, and his frail body was too slight an obstacle to cause the projectile to explode.

As they progress the fire grows heavier. The advances are made at a run, and the men are no longer erect. Here and there there are gaps in the line; but now there is no more looking back to see what is better unseen when advancing to the attack. One man whose comrade drops at his side *does* hesitate, and falls behind to help. He is sharply recalled to his duty,—

"That is not the way to get the V.C., my man. You can save the wounded when we retreat in face of the enemy—not when we advance."

This is no time for sentiment. The words are bitter and bracing as a tonic. This is war. In an attack a friend of a lifetime —a brother—must be left where he falls, to take his chance, and *perhaps* to be picked up in time by the ambulance men who follow behind.

A shrapnel from the right passes close over the heads of the advancing line, fanning their heated cheeks with a sudden draught of air. It explodes somewhere on the left flank, and as the smoke clears the officer in command sees half-a-dozen men on their hands and knees—

"Stop that ducking, will you, you d—d lot of cowards, or I'll come behind you!"

Unconsidered and inconsiderate. The backward concussion of air from the shell bursting so close had thrown the men, already crouched to advance, on their faces. Tact is a valuable quality even in the heat of action.

A momentary halt is made at the bottom of the hill, where the deep straight-cut bed of a narrow brook affords all but complete shelter. They can look around them now, and are near enough to see. About 1000 yards to their left front on the skirt of a wood cresting the hill is posted a battery of guns, with either one or two pom-poms; while full on the right flank, past where the depression in which they are halted meets the line of the river, stands a farmhouse with its buildings. This is shown to be strongly held by the flashes of gun- and musketry-fire from intrenchments round it. Above them the air sings with the con-

tinuous cross-fire of projectiles from both positions, while the level ground around them is torn up like a muddy road by a storm of hail.

Suddenly round the bend of the brook-bed from the left comes a single mounted figure, —a galloper. He has been wounded in the buttock, and his pale face and swaying figure show the strain from pain and loss of blood. He musters a smile as he passes the reclining figures of the attacking line,—

"I shan't be able to boast of my wounds much when I go back into society, and the ladies ask me, shall I?

"Where's your commanding officer? Oh! I beg your pardon, captain; but the colonel says you are to dislodge those guns to your left front. They have got the range of the main body behind you."

"Very well, sir."

"Advance!"

With a clatter of tin water-bottles and accoutrements, the men climb the farther bank and form up, kneeling, beyond.

"Advance! Double!"

Panting and breathing hard, they breast at a run the slope beyond.

"Fire a volley! Ready!"

They drop on their knees, and with fingers trembling from their exertions pluck at bandolier or breech-bolt.

"At the enemy in front. At twelve hundred," continues the voice.

"Not nine," grumbles an old veldt-hand, adjusting his sight. "Never mind, it'll drop on to them behind that crest."

"Present!"

Trembling arms and heaving shoulders try to align unsteady rifles on the half-seen enemy in front.

"Fire!"

A sputtering volley, followed for a second or two by a few belated dropping shots.

"Advance! Double!" and the same programme is repeated.

However little practical effect this method of fire-tactics might be expected to have as regards execution on the enemy, the moral effect, whether of the volleys or of the dogged unswerving advance, appears to be enormous; for as the now broken and uneven line of the attack advances to shorter and shorter ranges, the fire from the opposing guns, still chiefly directed at the main body behind, gradually slackens, and at some 600 yards' range finally ceases.

The firing-line have by now, however, far outstripped their supports, and as, panting and exhausted, they lie down to await the arrival of these latter, they can catch glimpses, through the trees in front and above them, of the enemy's guns, as, limbered up and moving down the slope across their front to the right, they go to join the other column of the enemy at the farmhouse across the river. An impulsive trooper turns to the non-commissioned officer behind him,—

"Do you think if I asked the skipper for a troop to cut off those guns I could get them?"

"You'd get arrest first and a court-martial afterwards for insubordination. *He* won't

move till those supports come up."

The impulsive trooper sinks again into dissatisfied quiescence, thinking — perhaps not altogether wrongly — that a great chance has been supinely missed.

At last, on the arrival of the supports, the front is slowly changed towards where the din of musketry and artillery to the right shows that a stubborn fight is being waged for the possession of the farmhouse across the river. Now they are ready for all eventualities, but the occasion for their services does not arrive. They can only rest and watch the increasing accuracy and effect of our shells and the audible and visible slackening of the enemy's answering fire until the shadows of the evening come up and veil the scene from their inquiring eyes. To their ears, however, still comes at slowly lengthening intervals the intermittent boom of the cannon and the yapping of the pom-poms as they cover the retreat of the vanquished enemy.

The air grows colder as night draws in, and the stars shine out with ever-increasing brilliance as the blue of the sky grows more velvety and dark, but still no order to move has reached them. As they wait, their clothing, sodden with sweat, strikes chilly and damp against their stiff and weary limbs. Their water-bottles are empty, and most have had no food that day; but in their hearts is exultation, for though there has been no pursuit, and the Boer army has escaped them, yet they reflect that it is difficult to surround and cut off an enemy of double or treble their strength; and, after all, they have done their duty, and the road to Mafeking is open at last.

THE RELIEF.

They lie huddled close to one another for warmth, their numb fingers hardly feeling in their grasp the biting cold of their rifles, and, as they wait for their next call to duty, watch vacantly on the opposite hillside the crimson pattern of patches where our shells have made the dried-up grass to smoulder. They are too weary to talk except in monosyllables on the trivialities of the moment, too cold to sleep except in brief snatches, when the quick wakening only adds new poignancy to the numb soreness of their limbs. Fatigue and cold, hunger and thirst, have sunk them to the level of unreasoning creation, and, by a merciful reaction of nature, their perceptions, like those of hibernating animals, are all but closed to the discomfort of their surroundings. From in front —seen, but as if unseen, two darker shadows condense themselves from the darkness of the night; heard, but as if unheard, the footfall of horses reaches their unperceiving consciousness.

"Fall in for muster!"

Like figures in a dream, they find themselves erect and in their habitual places. On either side there may be gaps, but these signify nothing more than empty space to irresponsive thought.

"Answer to your names."

Even the fateful silence following the calling and repetition of a name brings home no living sense that such silences represent the roll of the wounded, the missing, and the dead. Mechanically as automatons they obey the succeeding orders. Gaps are closed, and in column of fours they are stumbling blindly through the veldt towards where faint half-heard sounds indicate that the main body is lying bivouacked. Halts are frequent to verify the direction of the march, for sound is misleading, and some fifty yards is the circumscribing radius of sight.

At last they have reached the waggons, but food no longer tempts and fires are forbidden. A gulp of water, blankets hastily unrolled around each pile of arms, and then—temporary oblivion. An hour—two hours—and once again they are in the ranks, shivering in the bitter cold of midnight and only half refreshed. First the usual and inevitable delay, and then they are once again on the march. Progress is painful and slow, with frequent and irritating checks, as is always the case when a long column, cumbered with transport, is on the road by night. Gradually the sky lightens and brings depressingly to view the endless bare expanse of undulating veldt which lies to the north of Mafeking. The usual falsely encouraging rumours have been circulated that there are only four miles to march, and still, as the fourth and fifth and sixth miles are left behind, and as each successive undulation is surmounted, the same blank prospect meets the gaze.

But even on a march the end cannot be quite indefinitely postponed. As they reach the crest of a slope somewhat longer and steeper than usual, there lies below them a great saucer ringed round with hills and crossed by an interrupted silver streak. In the centre, like a pearl and emerald gem set in a gown of Quaker drab, gleam the white houses and green trees of Mafeking. They lose sight of it again as they descend into the intervening hollow; but that glimpse of their goal has brought a new springiness into their stride and a new light into their eyes. As they descend the next slope their sight takes in the meaning of the scene around. They trace in the dim light the pitifully small circle of trenches built and manned by the brave defenders, and stretching to right and left of them and scoring the hills opposed, the commanding positions and long lines of the now deserted Boer forts and intrenchments.

What wonder that chests are swelling and heads carried high in pride—that they should be proud of their gallant brethren down below there, who for months have upheld against such odds the honour of their

name and country—proud, too, of themselves, who have against equal or greater odds conserved the integrity of the frontier, and at last won through to bring the sorely needed succour. They mark, too, with a thrill of indignation, over hospital and women's laager the long waving rows of red-cross flags, which had so long fluttered an unmistakable but disregarded appeal to the chivalry of caitiff besiegers. Perhaps for a moment the thought of their reception holds their fancy, and a vision of martial music and flags, of cheers and hand-clasps from the men, of fluttering handkerchiefs and tears from the women, flits across their eyes. If so, it is not for long.

As they swing down the hill the head of the column reaches the first outpost, and another check occurs while the requirements of discipline in the matter of mutual military challenges and compliments are solemnly complied with. Then the column proceeds on its way. Somehow, to the observer, as he compares the clean, plump, pink-and-white faces of the besieged with those of the relieving force, haggard, gaunt, and dust-grimed, the contrast strikes a jarring note. It is, as it were, incongruous and incorrect.

A little interchange of greetings and conversation takes place.

"You are Plumer's and Mahon's men, aren't you? The relief force? Oh, we didn't expect you till to-morrow! Didn't you have a scrap yesterday afternoon? Ah, thought we heard the guns—well—see you later, no doubt. So long."

That was the keynote. They had not been expected till the morrow. It was almost as if their coming had been inconvenient, badly arranged. At the least, they might have sent a telegram to have a little supper laid out for them in the dining-room, and a fire lit upstairs. It was unfair to take people by surprise in such a manner.

The cold grey air of the dawn which witnessed their entry into sleeping Mafeking seemed, as it were, the outward materialisation of the chill grey cheerlessness of their reception. It was with a feeling of disillusionment, almost of resentment, that the troops marched to a bivouac on the open green, and waited for the waggons which were to bring them their blankets and longed-for rest. This feeling was hardly dispelled by the fact of their being detailed for duty in the trenches that same night in place of the town guard disbanded, nor even by the somewhat tardy but generous and ungrudging official recognition of their services as disclosed in Major-General Baden-Powell's speeches to the paraded relieving forces on the following day.

THE WATCHER BY THE THRESHOLD.

CHAPTER I.—THE HOUSE OF MORE.

I.

I HAVE told this story to many audiences with diverse results, and once again I take my reputation in my hands and brave the perils. To the common circle of my friends it was a romance for a winter's fire, and I, the most prosaic of men, was credited with a fancy. Once I repeated it to an acquaintance, who, scenting mystery, transcribed it in a notebook, and, with feigned names, it figured in the publications of a Learned Society. One man only heard me with true appreciation; but he was a wandering spirit with an ear open to marvels, and I hesitate to advance his security. He received it simply, saying that God was great, and I cannot improve upon his comment.

A chill evening in the early October of the year 189– found me driving in a dog-cart through the belts of antique woodland which form the lowland limits of the hilly parish of More. The Highland express, which brought me from the north, took me no farther than Perth. Thence it had been a slow journey in a disjointed local train, till I emerged on the platform at Morefoot, with a bleak prospect of pit-stalks, coal-heaps, certain sour corn-lands, and far to the west a line of moor where the sun was setting. A neat groom and a respectable trap took the edge off my discomfort, and soon I had forgotten my sacrifice and found eyes for the darkening landscape. We were driving through a land of thick woods, cut at rare intervals by old long-frequented highways. The More, which at Morefoot is an open sewer, became a sullen woodland stream, where the brown leaves of the season drifted. At times we would pass an ancient lodge, and through a gap in the trees would come a glimpse of chipped crow-step gable. The names of such houses, as told me by my companion, were all famous. This one had been the home of a drunken Jacobite laird, and a kind of north-country Medmenham. Unholy revels had waked the old halls, and the devil had been toasted at many a hell-fire dinner. The next was the property of a great Scots law family, and there the old Lord of Session who built the place, in his frowsy wig and carpet slippers, had laid down the canons of Taste for his day and society. The whole country had the air of faded and bygone gentility. The mossy roadside walls had stood for two hundred years, the few wayside houses were tollbars or defunct hostelries. The names, too, were great—

Scots baronial with a smack of France — Chatelray and Reiverslaw, Black Holm and Fountainblue. The place had a cunning charm, mystery dwelt in every cranny, and yet it did not please me. The earth smelt heavy and raw, the roads were red underfoot, all was old, sorrowful, and uncanny. Compared with the fresh Highland glen I had left, where wind and sun and flying showers were never absent, all was chilly and dull and dead. Even when the sun sent a shiver of crimson over the crests of certain firs, I felt no delight in the prospect. I admitted shamefacedly to myself that I was in a very bad temper.

I had been staying at Glenaicill with the Clanroydens, and for a week had found the proper pleasure in life. You know the house with its old rooms and gardens, and the miles of heather which defend it from the world. The shooting had been extraordinary for a wild place far on in the season, for there are few partridges and the woodcock are notoriously late. I had done respectably in my stalking, more than respectably on the river, and creditably on the moors. Moreover, there were pleasant people in the house—and there were the Clanroydens. I had had a hard year's work, sustained to the last moment of term, and a fortnight in Norway had been disastrous. It was therefore with real comfort that I had settled myself down for another ten days in Glenaicill, when all my plans were shattered by Sybil's letter. Sybil is my cousin and my very good friend, and in old days when I was briefless I had fallen in love with her many times. But she very sensibly chose otherwise, and married a man Ladlaw—Robert John Ladlaw—who had been at school with me. He was a cheery, good-humoured fellow, a great sportsman, a justice of the peace and deputy-lieutenant for his county, and something of an antiquary in a mild way. He had a box in Leicestershire to which he went in the hunting season; but from February till October he lived in his moorland home. The place was called the House of More, and I had shot at it once or twice in recent years. I remembered its loneliness and its comfort, the charming diffident Sybil and Ladlaw's genial welcome. And my recollections set me puzzling again over the letter which that morning had broken into my comfort. "You promised us a visit this autumn," Sybil had written, "and I wish you would come as soon as you can." So far common politeness. But she had gone on to reveal the fact that Ladlaw was ill, she did not know how exactly, but something, she thought, about his heart. Then she had signed herself my affectionate cousin, and then had come a short violent postscript, in which, as it were, the fences of convention had been laid low. "For Heaven's sake come and see us!" she scrawled below. "Bob is terribly ill, and I am crazy. Come at

once." And then she finished with an afterthought, "Don't bother about bringing doctors. It is not their business."

She had assumed that I would come, and dutifully I set out. I could not regret my decision, but I took leave to upbraid my luck. The thought of Glenaicill with the woodcock beginning to arrive, and the Clanroydens imploring me to stay, saddened my journey in the morning, and the murky, coally, midland country of the afternoon completed my depression. The drive through the woodlands of More failed to raise my spirits. I was anxious about Sybil and Ladlaw, and the accursed country had always given me a certain eeriness on my first approaching it. You may call it silly; but I have no nerves, and am little susceptible to vague sentiment. It was sheer physical dislike of the rich deep soil, the woody and antique smells, the melancholy roads and trees, and the flavour of old mystery. I am aggressively healthy and wholly Philistine. I love clear outlines and strong colours, and More, with its half-tints and hazy distances, depressed me miserably. Even when the road crept uphill and the trees ended, I found nothing to hearten me in the moorland which succeeded. It was genuine moorland, close on 800 feet above the sea, and through it ran this old grass-grown coach-road. Low hills rose to the left, and to the right after some miles of peat flared the chimneys of pits and oil-works. Straight in front the moor ran out into the horizon, and there in the centre was the last dying spark of the sun. The place was as still as the grave save for the crunch of our wheels on the grassy road; but the flaring lights to the north seemed to endow it with life. I have rarely felt so keenly the feeling of movement in the inanimate world. It was an unquiet place, and I shivered nervously. Little gleams of loch came from the hollows, the burns were brown with peat, and every now and then there rose in the moor jags of sickening red stone. I remembered that Ladlaw had talked about the place as the old Manann, the holy land of the ancient races. I had paid little attention at the time, but now it struck me that the old peoples had been wise in their choice. There was something uncanny in this soil and air. Framed in dank mysterious woods, and a country of coal and ironstone, no great distance, too, from the capital city, it was a sullen relic of a lost barbarism. Over the low hills lay a green pastoral country with bright streams and valleys, but here in this peaty desert there were few sheep and little cultivation. The House of More was the only dwelling, and, save for the ragged village, the wilderness was given over to the wild things of the hills. The shooting was good; but the best shooting on earth would not persuade me to make my abode in such a place. Ladlaw was ill; well, I did not wonder. You can have uplands without air, moors that are not health-giving, and a country life which

is more arduous than a townsman's. I shivered again, for I seemed to have passed in a few hours from the open noon to a kind of dank twilight.

We passed the village and entered the lodge-gates. Here there were trees again, little innocent new-planted firs, which flourished badly. Some large plane-trees grew near the house, and there were thickets upon thickets of the ugly elder. Even in the half-darkness I could see that the lawns were trim and the flower-beds respectable for the season; doubtless Sybil looked after the gardeners. The oblong white-washed house, more like a barrack than ever, opened suddenly on my sight, and I experienced my first sense of comfort since I left Glenaicill. Here I should find warmth and company, and, sure enough, the hall-door was wide open, and in the great flood of light which poured from it Sybil stood to welcome me.

She ran down the steps as I dismounted, and, with a word to the groom, caught my arm and drew me into the shadow. "Oh, Henry, it was so good of you to come. You mustn't let Bob think that you know he is ill. We don't talk about it. I'll tell you afterwards. I want you to cheer him up. Now we must go in, for he is in the hall expecting you."

While I stood blinking in the light, Ladlaw came forward with outstretched hand and his usual cheery greeting. I looked at him and saw nothing unnatural in his appearance: a little drawn at the lips, perhaps, and heavy below the eyes, but still fresh-coloured and healthy. It was Sybil who showed change. She was very pale, her pretty eyes were deplorably mournful, and in place of her delightful shyness there was the self-confidence and composure of pain. I was honestly shocked, and as I dressed my heart was full of hard thoughts about Ladlaw. What could his illness mean? He seemed well and cheerful, while Sybil was pale, and yet it was Sybil who had written the postscript. As I warmed myself by the fire, I resolved that this particular family difficulty was my proper business.

II.

The Ladlaws were waiting for me in the drawing-room. I noticed something new and strange in Sybil's demeanour. She looked to her husband with a motherly protective air, while Ladlaw, who had been the extreme of masculine independence, seemed to cling to his wife with a curious appealing fidelity. In conversation he did little more than echo her words. Till dinner was announced he spoke of the weather, the shooting, and Mabel Clanroyden. Then he did a queer thing, for, when I was about to offer my arm to Sybil, he forestalled me, and, clutching her right arm with his left hand, led the way to the dining-room, leaving me to follow in some bewilderment.

I have rarely taken part in a

more dismal meal. The House of More has a pretty Georgian panelling through most of the rooms; but in the dining-room the walls are level, and painted a dull stone colour. Abraham offered up Isaac in a ghastly picture in front of me. Some photographs of the Quorn hung over the mantelpiece, and five or six drab ancestors filled up the remaining space. But one thing was new and startling. A great marble bust, a genuine antique, frowned on me from a pedestal. The head was in the late Roman style, clearly of some emperor, and in its commonplace environment the great brows, the massive neck, and the mysterious, solemn lips had a surprising effect. I nodded towards the thing, and asked what it represented.

Ladlaw grunted something which I took for "Justinian," but he never raised his eyes from his plate. By accident I caught Sybil's glance. She looked towards the bust, and laid a finger on her lips.

The meal grew more doleful as it advanced. Sybil scarcely touched a dish, but her husband ate ravenously of everything. He was a strong, thick-set man, with a square, kindly face, burned brown by the sun. Now he seemed to have suddenly coarsened. He gobbled with undignified haste, and his eye was extraordinarily vacant. A question made him start, and he would turn on me a face so strange and inert that I repented the interruption.

I asked him about the autumn's sport, and he collected his wits with difficulty. He thought it had been good on the whole, but he had shot badly. He had not been quite so fit as usual. No, he had had nobody staying with him—Sybil had wanted to be alone. He was afraid the moor might have been under-shot, but he would make a big day with keepers and farmers before the winter.

"Bob has done pretty well," Sybil said. "He hasn't been out often, for the weather has been very bad here. You can have no idea, Henry, how horrible this moorland place of ours can be when it tries. It is one great sponge sometimes, with ugly red burns, and mud to the ankles."

"I don't think it's healthy," said I.

Ladlaw lifted his face. "Nor do I: I think it's intolerable; but I am so busy, I can't get away."

Once again I caught Sybil's warning eye as I was about to question him on his business.

Clearly the man's brain had received a shock, and he was beginning to suffer from hallucinations. This could be the only explanation, for he had always led a temperate life. The *distrait* wandering manner was the only sign of his malady, for otherwise he seemed normal and mediocre as ever. My heart grieved for Sybil, alone with him in this wilderness.

Then he broke the silence. He lifted his head and looked nervously around till his eye fell on the Roman bust.

"Do you know that this country-side is the old Manann?" he said.

It was an odd turn to the

conversation, but I was glad of a sign of intelligence. I answered that I had heard so.

"It's a queer name," he said oracularly; "but the thing it stood for was queerer. Manann, Manaw," he repeated, rolling the words on his tongue. As he spoke, he glanced sharply, and, as it seemed to me, fearfully, at his left side.

The movement of his body made his napkin slip from his left knee and fall on the floor. It leaned against his leg, and he started from its touch as if he had been stung by a snake. I have never seen a more sheer and transparent terror on a man's face. He got to his feet, his strong frame shaking like a rush. Sybil ran round to his side, picked up the napkin, and flung it on a sideboard. Then she stroked his hair as one would stroke a frightened horse. She called him by his old boy's name of Robin, and at her touch and voice he became quiet. But the particular course then in progress was removed untasted.

In a few minutes he seemed to have forgotten his behaviour, for he took up the former conversation. For a time he spoke well and briskly.

"You lawyers," he said, "understand only the dry framework of the past. You cannot conceive the rapture, which only the antiquary can feel, of constructing in every detail an old culture. Take this Manann. If I could explore the secret of these moors, I would write the world's greatest book. I would write of that prehistoric life when man was knit close to nature. I would describe the people who were brothers of the red earth and the red rock and the red streams of the hills. Oh, it would be horrible, but superb, tremendous! It would be more than a piece of history; it would be a new gospel, a new theory of life. It would kill materialism once and for all. Why, man, all the poets who have deified and personified nature would not do an eighth part of my work. I would show you the unknown, the hideous, shrieking mystery at the back of this simple nature. Men would see the profundity of the old crude faiths which they affect to despise. I would make a picture of our shaggy, sombre-eyed forefather, who heard strange things in the hill-silences. I would show him brutal and terror-stricken, but wise, wise, God alone knows how wise! The Romans knew it, and they learned what they could from him, but he did not tell them much. But we have some of his blood in us, and we may go deeper. Manann! A queer land nowadays! I sometimes love it and sometimes hate it, but I always fear it. It is like that statue, inscrutable."

I would have told him that he was talking mystical nonsense; but I had looked towards the bust, and my rudeness was checked on my lips. The moor might be a common piece of ugly waste land, but the statue was inscrutable—of that there was no doubt. I hate your cruel, heavy-mouthed Roman busts; to me they have none of the beauty of life, and little

of the interest of art. But my eyes were fastened on this as they had never before looked on marble. The oppression of the heavy woodlands, the mystery of the silent moor, seemed to be caught and held in this face. It was the intangible mystery of culture on the verge of savagery, a cruel, lustful wisdom, and yet a kind of bitter austerity which laughed at the game of life and stood aloof. There was no weakness in the heavy-veined brow and slumbrous eyelids. It was the face of one who had conquered the world and found it dust and ashes, one who had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and scorned human wisdom. And at the same time it was the face of one who knew uncanny things, a man who was the intimate of the half-world and the dim background of life. Why on earth I should connect the Roman grandee [1] with the moorland parish of More, I cannot say; but the fact remains, that there was that in the face which I knew had haunted me through the woodlands and bogs of the place, a sleepless, dismal, incoherent melancholy.

"I bought that at Colenzo's," Ladlaw said, "because it took my fancy. It matches well with this place."

I thought it matched very ill with his drab walls and Quorn photographs, but I held my peace.

"Do you know who it is?" he asked. "It is the head of the greatest man the world has ever seen. You are a lawyer and know your Justinian."

The Pandects are scarcely part of the daily work of a common-law barrister. I had not looked into them since I left college.

"I know that he married an actress," I said, "and was a sort of all-round genius. He made law and fought battles and had rows with the Church. A curious man! And wasn't there some story about his selling his soul to the Devil and getting law in exchange. Rather a poor bargain!"

I chattered away sillily enough, to dispel the gloom of that dinner-table. The result of my words was unhappy. Ladlaw gasped, and caught at his left side as if in pain. Sybil, with tragic eyes, had been making signs to me to hold my peace. Now she ran round to her husband's side and comforted him like a child. As she passed me she managed to whisper in my ear to talk to her only and let her husband alone.

For the rest of dinner I obeyed my orders to the letter. Ladlaw ate his food in gloomy silence, while I spoke to Sybil of our relatives and friends, of London, Glenaicill, and any

[1] I have identified the bust, which, when seen under other circumstances, had little power to affect me. It was a copy of the head of Justinian in the Tesci Museum at Venice, and several duplicates exist, dating apparently from the seventh century, and showing traces of Byzantine decadence in the scrollwork on the hair. It is engraved in M. Delacroix's 'Byzantium,' and, I think, in Windscheid's 'Pandektenlehrbuch.'

random subject. The poor girl was dismally forgetful, and her eye would wander to her husband with wifely anxiety. I remember being suddenly overcome by the comic aspect of it all. Here were we three fools alone in this dank upland, one of us sick and nervous, talking out-of-the-way nonsense about Manann and Justinian, gobbling his food and getting scared at his napkin, another gravely anxious, and myself at my wits' end for a solution. It was a Mad Tea-party with a vengeance, Sybil the melancholy little Dormouse, and Ladlaw the incomprehensible Hatter. I laughed aloud, but checked myself when I caught my cousin's eye. It was really no case for finding humour. Ladlaw was very ill, and Sybil's face was getting deplorably thin.

I welcomed the end of that meal with unmannerly joy, for I wanted to speak seriously with my host. Sybil told the butler to have the lamps lit in the library. Then she leaned over to me and spoke low and rapidly: "I want you to talk with Bob. I'm sure you can do him good. You'll have to be very patient with him and very gentle. Oh, please try and find out what is wrong with him. He won't tell me, and I can only guess."

The butler returned with word that the library was ready to receive us, and Sybil rose to go. Ladlaw half rose, protesting, making the most curious, feeble clutches at his side. His wife quieted him. "Henry will look after you, dear," she said. "You are going into the library to smoke." Then she slipped from the room, and we were left alone.

He caught my arm fiercely with his left hand, and his grip nearly made me cry out. As we walked down the hall I could feel his arm twitching from the elbow to the shoulder. Clearly he was in pain, and I set it down to some form of cardiac affection, which might possibly issue in paralysis.

I settled him in the biggest arm-chair, and took one of his cigars. The library is the pleasantest room in the house, and at night, when a peat-fire burned on the old hearth and the great red curtains were drawn, it used to be the place for comfort and good talk. Now I noticed changes. Ladlaw's book-shelves had been filled with the proceedings of antiquarian societies and many light-hearted works in *belles-lettres*. But now the Badminton Library had been cleared out of a shelf where it stood most convenient to the hand, and its place taken by an old Leyden reprint of Justinian. There were books on Byzantine subjects of which I never dreamed he had heard the names. There were volumes of history and speculation, all of a slightly bizarre kind; and to crown everything, there were several bulky medical works with gaudily coloured plates. The old atmosphere of sport and travel had gone from the room, with the medley of rods, whips, and gun-cases which used to cumber the tables.

Now the place was moderately tidy and slightly learned—and I did not like it.

Ladlaw refused to smoke, and sat for a little while in silence. Then of his own accord he broke the tension,—

"It was devilish good of you to come, Harry. This is a lonely place for a man who is a bit seedy."

"I thought you might be alone," I said, "so I looked you up on my way down from Glenaicill. I'm sorry to find you looking ill."

"Do you notice it?" he asked sharply.

"It's tolerably patent," I said. "Have you seen a doctor?"

He said something uncomplimentary about doctors, and kept looking at me with his curious dull eyes.

I remarked the strange posture in which he sat—his head screwed round to his right shoulder, and his whole body a protest against something at his left hand.

"It looks like your heart," I said. "You seem to have pains in your left side."

Again a spasm of fear. I went over to him and stood at the back of his chair.

"Now, for goodness' sake, my dear fellow, tell me what is wrong? You're scaring Sybil to death. It's lonely work for the poor girl, and I wish you would let me help you."

He was lying back in his chair now, with his eyes half shut, and shivering like a frightened colt. The extraordinary change in one who had been the strongest of the strong kept me from realising its gravity. I put a hand on his shoulder, but he flung it off.

"For God's sake sit down!" he said hoarsely. "I'm going to tell you; but I'll never make you understand."

I sat down promptly opposite him.

"It's the Devil," he said very solemnly.

I am afraid that I was rude enough to laugh. He took no notice, but sat with the same tense, miserable air, staring over my head.

"Right," said I. "Then it is the Devil. It's a new complaint, so it's as well I did not bring a doctor. How does it affect you?"

He made the old impotent clutch at the air with his left hand. I had the sense to become grave at once. Clearly this was some mental affection, some hallucination born of physical pain.

Then he began to talk in a low voice, very rapidly, with his head bent forward like a hunted animal's. I am not going to set down what he told me in his own words, for they were incoherent often, and there was much repetition. But I am going to write the gist of the odd story which took my sleep away on that autumn night, with such explanations and additions as I think needful. The fire died down, the wind arose, the hour grew late, and still he went on in his mumbling recitative. I forgot to smoke, forgot my comfort,—everything but the odd figure of my friend and his inconceivable romance.

And the night before I had been in cheerful Glenaicill!

. . . . . .

He had returned to the House of More, he said, in the latter part of May, and shortly after he fell ill. It was a trifling sickness—influenza or something—but he had never quite recovered. The rainy weather of June depressed him, and the extreme heat of July made him listless and weary. A kind of insistent sleepiness hung over him, and he suffered much from nightmare. Towards the end of July his former health returned; but he was haunted with a curious oppression. He seemed to himself to have lost the art of being alone. There was a perpetual sound in his left ear, a kind of moving and rustling at his left side, which never left him by night or day. In addition he had become the prey of nerves and an insensate dread of the unknown.

Ladlaw, as I have explained, was a commonplace man, with fair talents, a mediocre culture, honest instincts, and the beliefs and incredulities of his class. On abstract grounds I should have declared him an unlikely man to be the victim of a hallucination. He had a kind of dull, bourgeois rationalism, which used to find reasons for all things in heaven and earth. At first he controlled his dread with proverbs. He told himself it was the sequel of his illness, or the light-headedness of summer heat on the moors. But it soon outgrew his comfort. It became a living second presence, an *alter ego* which dogged his footsteps. He became acutely afraid of it. He dared not be alone for a moment, and clung to Sybil's company despairingly. She went off for a week's visit in the beginning of August, and he endured for seven days the tortures of the lost. His malady advanced upon him with swift steps. The presence became more real daily. In the early dawning, in the twilight, and in the first hours of the morning it seemed at times to take a visible bodily form. A kind of amorphous featureless shadow would run from his side into the darkness, and he would sit palsied with terror. Sometimes in lonely places his footsteps sounded double, and something would brush elbows with him. Human society alone exorcised it. With Sybil at his side he was happy; but as soon as she left him the thing came slinking back from the unknown to watch by him. Company might have saved him, but joined to his affliction was a crazy dread of his fellows. He would not leave his moorland home, but must bear his burden alone among the wild streams and mosses of that dismal place.

The Twelfth came, and he shot wretchedly, for his nerve had gone to pieces. He stood exhaustion badly, and became a dweller about the doors. But with this bodily inertness came an extraordinary intellectual revival. He read widely in a blundering way, and he speculated unceasingly. It was characteristic of the man that,

as soon as he left the paths of the prosaic, he should seek his supernatural in a very concrete form. He assumed that he was haunted by the Devil—the visible, personal Devil in whom our fathers believed. He waited hourly for the shape at his side to speak, but no words came. The Accuser of the Brethren in all but tangible form was his ever-present companion. He felt, he declared, the spirit of old evil entering subtly into his blood. He sold his soul many times over, and yet there was no possibility of resistance. It was a Visitation more undeserved than Job's, and a thousandfold more awful.

For a week or more he was tortured with a kind of religious mania. When a man of a healthy, secular mind finds himself adrift on the terrible ocean of religious troubles, he is peculiarly helpless, for he has not the most rudimentary knowledge of the winds and tides. It was useless to call up his old carelessness; he had suddenly dropped into a new world where old proverbs did not apply. And all the while, mind you, there was the shrieking terror of it—an intellect all alive to the torture and the most unceasing physical fear. For a little he was on the far edge of idiocy.

Then by accident it took a new form. While sitting with Sybil one day in the library, he began listlessly to turn over the leaves of an old book. He read a few pages, and found the hint of a story like his own. It was some French life of Justinian, one of the unscholarly productions of last century, made up of stories from Procopius and tags of Roman law. Here was his own case written down in black and white; and the man had been a king of kings! This was a new comfort, and for a little—strange though it may seem—he took a sort of pride in his affliction. He worshipped the great emperor and read every scrap he could find on him, not excepting the Pandects and the Digest. He sent for the bust in the dining-room, paying a fabulous price. Then he settled himself to study his imperial prototype, and the study became an idolatry. As I have said, Ladlaw was a man of ordinary talents and certainly of meagre imaginative power. And yet from the lies of the 'Secret History' and the crudities of German legalists he had constructed a marvellous portrait of a man. Sitting there in the half-lit room, he drew the picture,—the quiet, cold king with his inheritance of Dacian mysticism, holding the great world in fee, giving it law and religion, fighting its wars, building its churches, and yet all the while intent upon his own private work of making his peace with his soul. The churchman and warrior whom all the world worshipped, and yet one going through life with his lip quivering, the Watcher by the Threshold ever at his left side. Sometimes at night in the great Brazen Palace, warders heard the emperor walking in the dark corridors, alone and yet not alone; for once, when a servant entered

with a lamp, he saw his master with a face as of another world, and something beside him which had no face or shape, but which he knew to be that hoary Evil which is older than the stars. Crazy nonsense! I had to rub my eyes to assure myself that I was not sleeping. No! There was my friend with his suffering face, and it was the library of More.

And then he spoke of Theodora — actress, harlot, *dévote*, empress. For him the lady was but another part of the uttermost horror, a form of the shapeless thing at his side. I felt myself falling under the fascination. I have no nerves and little imagination, but in a flash I seemed to realise something of that awful featureless face, crouching ever at a man's hand, till darkness and loneliness comes and it rises to its mastery. I shivered as I looked at the man in the chair before me. Those dull eyes of his were looking upon things I could not see, and I saw their terror. I realised that it was grim earnest for him. Nonsense or no, some devilish fancy had usurped the place of sanity, and he was being slowly broken upon the wheel. And then, when his left hand twitched, I almost cried out. I had thought it comic before; now it seemed the last proof of tragedy.

He stopped, and I got up with loose knees and went to the window. Better the black night than the intangible horror within. I flung up the sash and looked out across the moor. There was no light, nothing but an inky darkness and the uncanny rustle of elder-bushes. The sound chilled me, and I closed the window.

"The land is the old Manann," Ladlaw was saying. "We are beyond the pale here. Do you hear the wind?"

I forced myself back into sanity and looked at my watch. It was nearly one o'clock.

"What ghastly idiots we are!" I said. "I am off to bed."

Ladlaw looked at me helplessly. "For God's sake don't leave me alone!" he moaned. "Get Sybil."

We went together back to the hall, while he kept the same feverish grip on my arm. Some one was sleeping in a chair by the hall-fire, and to my distress I recognised my hostess. The poor child must have been sadly wearied. She came forward with her anxious face.

"I'm afraid Bob has kept you very late, Henry," she said. "I hope you will sleep well. Breakfast at nine, you know." And then I left them.

Over my bed there was a little picture, a reproduction of some Italian work of Christ and the Demoniac. Some impulse made me hold my candle up to it. The madman's face was torn with passion and suffering, and his eye had the pained furtive look which I had come to know. And by his left side there was a dim shape crouching.

I got into bed hastily, but not to sleep. I felt that my reason must be going. I had been pitchforked from our clear

and cheerful modern life into the mists of old superstition. Old tragic stories of my Calvinist upbringing returned to haunt me. The man dwelt in by a devil was no new fancy; but I believed that Science had docketed and analysed and explained the Devil out of the world. I remembered my dabblings in the occult before I settled down to law—the story of Donisarius the monk of Padua, the unholy legend of the Face of Proserpina, the tales of *succubi* and *incubi*, the Leannain Sith and the Hidden Presence. But here was something stranger still. I had stumbled upon that very possession which fifteen hundred years ago had made the monks of New Rome tremble and cross themselves. Some devilish occult force, lingering through the ages, had come to life after a long sleep. God knows what earthly connection there was between the splendid Emperor of the World and my prosaic friend, or between the glittering shores of the Bosphorus and this moorland parish! But the land was the old Manann! The spirit may have lingered in the earth and air, a deadly legacy from Pict and Roman. I had felt the uncanniness of the place; I had augured ill of it from the first. And then in sheer disgust I rose and splashed my face with cold water.

I lay down again, laughing miserably at my credulity. That I, the sober and rational, should believe in this crazy fable, was too palpably absurd. I would steel my mind resolutely against such harebrained theories. It was a mere bodily ailment,—liver out of order, weak heart, bad circulation, or something of that sort. At the worst it might be some affection of the brain to be treated by a specialist. I vowed to myself that next morning the best doctor in Edinburgh should be brought to More.

The worst of it was that my duty compelled me to stand my ground. I foresaw the few remaining weeks of my holiday blighted. I should be tied to this moorland prison, a sort of keeper and nurse in one, tormented by silly fancies. It was a charming prospect, and the thought of Glenaicill and the woodcock made me bitter against Ladlaw. But there was no way out of it. I might do Ladlaw good, and I could not have Sybil worn to death by his vagaries.

My ill-nature comforted me, and I forgot the horror of the thing in its vexation. After that, I think I fell asleep and dozed uneasily till morning. When I awoke I was in a better frame of mind. The early sun had worked wonders with the moorland. The low hills stood out fresh-coloured and clear against the pale October sky, the elders sparkled with frost, the raw film of morn was rising from the little loch in tiny clouds. It was a cold rousing day, and I dressed in good spirits and went down to breakfast.

I found Ladlaw looking ruddy and well, very different from the broken man I remembered of the night before. We were

alone, for Sybil was breakfasting in bed. I remarked on his ravenous appetite, and he smiled cheerily. He made two jokes during the meal, he laughed often, and I began to forget the events of the previous day. It seemed to me that I might still flee from More with a clear conscience. He had forgotten about his illness. When I touched distantly upon the matter he showed a blank face.

It might be that the affection had passed: on the other hand, it might return to him at the darkening—I had no means to decide. His manner was still a trifle *distrait* and peculiar, and I did not like the dulness in his eye. At any rate, I should spend the day in his company, and the evening would decide the question.

I proposed shooting, which he promptly vetoed. He was no good at walking, he said, and the birds were wild. This seriously limited the possible occupations. Fishing there was none, and hill-climbing was out of the question. He proposed a game at billiards, and I pointed to the glory of the morning. It would have been sacrilege to waste such sunshine in knocking balls about. Finally we agreed to drive somewhere and have lunch, and he ordered the dog-cart.

In spite of all forebodings I enjoyed the day. We drove in the opposite direction from the woodland parts, right away across the moor to the coal-country beyond. We lunched at the little mining town of Borrowmuir, in a small and noisy public-house. The roads made bad going, the country was far from pretty, and yet the drive did not bore me. Ladlaw talked incessantly, talked as I had never heard man talk before. There was something indescribable in all he said,—a different point of view, a lost groove of thought, a kind of innocence and archaic shrewdness in one. I can only give you a hint of it by saying that it was like the mind of an early ancestor placed suddenly among modern surroundings. It was wise with a remote wisdom, and silly (now and then) with a quite antique and distant silliness.

I will give you instances of both. He provided me with a theory of certain early fortifications, which must be true, which commends itself to the mind with overwhelming conviction, and yet which is so out of the way of common speculation that no man could have guessed it. I do not propose to set down the details, for I am working at it on my own account. Again, he told me the story of an old marriage custom, which till recently survived in this district,—told it with full circumstantial detail and constant allusions to other customs which he could not possibly have known of. Now for the other side. He explained why well-water is in winter warmer than a running stream, and this was his explanation. At the Antipodes our winter is summer; consequently the water of a well which comes through from the other side of the earth must be warm in winter and cold in summer,

since in our summer it is winter there. You perceive what this is. It is no mere silliness, but a genuine effort of an early mind which had just grasped the fact of the Antipodes, to use it in explanation

Gradually I was forced to the belief that it was not Ladlaw who was talking to me, but something speaking through him, something at once wiser and simpler. My old fear of the Devil began to depart. This spirit, this exhalation, whatever it was, was ingenuous in its way, at least in its daylight aspect. For a moment I had an idea that it was a real reflex of Byzantine thought, and that by cross-examining I might make marvellous discoveries. The ardour of the scholar began to rise in me, and I asked a question about that much-debated point, the legal status of the *apocrisiarii*. To my vexation he gave no response. Clearly the intelligence of this familiar had its limits.

It was about three in the afternoon, and we had gone half of our homeward journey, when signs of the old terror began to appear. I was driving, and Ladlaw sat on my left. I noticed him growing nervous and silent, shivering at the flick of the whip, and turning half-way round towards me. Then he asked me to change places, and I had the unpleasant work of driving from the wrong side. After that I do not think he spoke once till we arrived at More, but sat huddled together with the driving-rug almost up to his chin—an eccentric figure of a man.

I foresaw another such night as the last, and I confess my heart sank. I had no stomach for more mysteries, and somehow with the approach of twilight the confidence of the day departed. The thing appeared in darker colours, and I could have found it in my mind to turn coward. Sybil alone deterred me. I could not bear to think of her alone with this demented being. I remembered her shy timidity, her innocence. It was monstrous that the poor thing should be called on thus to fight alone with phantoms. So I braced myself for another evening.

When we came to the House it was almost sunset. Ladlaw got out very carefully on the right side, and for a second stood by the horse. The sun was making our shadows long, and as I stood beyond him, it seemed for a moment that his shadow was double. It may have been mere fancy, for I had not time to look twice. He was standing, as I have said, with his left side next the horse. Suddenly the harmless elderly cob fell into a very panic of fright, reared upright, and all but succeeded in killing its master. I was in time to pluck Ladlaw from under its feet, but the beast had become perfectly unmanageable, and we left a groom struggling to quiet it.

In the hall the butler gave me a telegram. It was from my clerk, summoning me back at once to an important consultation.

CHAPTER II.—THE MINISTER INTERVENES.

Here was a prompt removal of my scruples! There could be no question of my remaining, for the case was one of the first importance, which I had feared might break up my holiday. The consultation fell in vacation-time to meet the convenience of certain people who were going abroad, and there was the most instant demand for my presence. I must go and at once; and, as I hunted in the time-table, I found that in five hours' time a night-train for the South would pass Borrowmuir, which might be stopped by special wire. This would give me time for dinner and a comfortable departure.

But I had no pleasure in my freedom, for I was in despair about Sybil. I must return to More—that was clear; and I must find some one to look after Ladlaw. I found my cousin in the drawing-room alone and told her my plans.

She was very pale and fragile, and she seemed to shiver as the prospect of solitude returned to her. I spoke with all the carelessness I could muster. "I am coming back," I said. "Don't think you have got rid of me so easily. It is most unpleasant to have to travel eight hundred miles in thirty-six hours, but there is no help for it. I ought to be back again by Friday morning. And you know Bob is much better. He was quite like his old self driving to-day."

My words comforted the poor child, and I went away with the novel feeling of a good conscience. Frankly, I hate the sordid and unpleasant. I am honestly a sun-worshipper; I have small taste for arduous duty, and the quixotic is my abhorrence. My professional success is an accident, for Lord knows I had no impulse to contend and little ambition. But somewhere or other I have the rudiments of an austere conscience. It gives me no peace, and as I love a quiet life, I do its bidding with a grumble. Now I grumbled fiercely in spirit, but outwardly I was a model of virtuous cheerfulness.

But to find somebody to keep Ladlaw company — there was the rub. I racked my brains to think of a substitute. It must be a man of some education and not a mere servant, and it must be somebody in the parish of More; the conjunction seemed for the moment impossible. Then a brilliant idea struck me. There was the minister of Morebrig, the ugly village by the roadside. I remembered him on previous visits. He was a burly young man, with a high complexion and a drooping blonde moustache, who smoked cheap cigarettes incessantly, and spat. He had been what they call a "brilliant student," and he was reported to be something of an orator, eagerly sought after by city congregations, but at present hiding his light under the bushel of Morebrig to allow him time to prepare some great theological work. Ladlaw had liked him in a half-amused and tolerant way, and he used to

come sometimes to dine. His name was Bruce Oliphant, and he inhabited a dark manse at the outskirts of the village.

I had an hour before dinner, and I set out for Mr Oliphant's dwelling. I remember the curious dull village street, without colour or life, drab women looking out of dingy doorways, and a solitary child playing in the red mud. The manse stood at the back of the usual elder thicket, a little place with small windows and a weather-stained front door. A gaunt old servant ushered me into Mr Oliphant's study, where I found that young man smoking and reading a weekly paper. It was a room well stocked with books in the popular religious vein, and the Poets in gilt editions adorned his shelves. Mr Oliphant greeted me with the nervous ease of one who would fain cultivate a good manner. The first sight of him sent my hopes down. He had a large calf-like face, mildly arrogant eyes, and a chin which fell sharply away beneath the eaves of his moustache. This was not one to do Ladlaw much good; indeed I questioned if I could ever make him understand, for the man before me had an impenetrable air of omniscience.

"I have come to ask you a great favour on behalf of the Ladlaws," said I. "You are the only other gentleman in the parish of More, and it is your duty to help your neighbours."

He bowed, with pleased eyes. "Anything," he said. "I'll be very glad."

"I am staying there just now, you know, and as it happens I must go back to town by the night-train. I'll only be gone a day, but you know that Ladlaw is a melancholy beggar and gets low-spirited. Now I want you to go up and stay at the House for a couple of nights while I am away."

It was an odd request, and he stared at me. "Why, what's wrong with Mr Ladlaw?" he asked. "I should never have called him melancholy. Now, his lady is different. She always looks a little pale. Did she send you to ask me?" Mr Oliphant was a stickler for the usages of polite society.

I sat down in a chair and took one of his cigarettes. "Now, look here, Oliphant," I said. "You are a man of education and common-sense, and I am going to do you the honour to tell you a story which I would not tell to a stupid man. A stupid man would laugh at me. I hope you will see the gravity of the thing."

I told him briefly the points in Ladlaw's case. His eyes grew very round as I went on, and when I finished he laughed nervously. He was clearly impressed; but he was too ignorant and unimaginative to understand fully, and he had his credit as a representative of modern thought to support. "Oh, come now! You don't mean all that; I never heard the like of it. You can't expect me as a Christian man to believe in a Pagan spirit. I might as well believe in ghosts at once. What has the familiar of a heathen emperor to do with this parish?"

"Justinian was a Christian," I said.

He looked puzzled. "It's all

preposterous. Meaning no disrespect to you, I must decline to believe it. My profession compels me to discourage such nonsense."

"So does mine," I said wearily. "Good Lord! man, do you think I came here to tell you a fairy tale? It's the most terrible earnest. Now I want you to give me an answer, for I have very little time."

He was still incredulous and inclined to argue. "Do you know if Mr Ladlaw has been—eh—a strictly temperate man?' he asked.

With this my patience departed. I got up to go with rude thoughts on the stupidity of the clergy. But Mr Oliphant was far from a refusal. He had no objection to exchange the barren comfort of the manse for the comparative luxury of the House, and he had no distrust of his power to enliven. As he accompanied me to the door he explained his position. "You see, if they really want me I will come. Tell Mrs Ladlaw that I shall be delighted. Mrs Ladlaw is a lady for whom I have a great respect."

"So have I," I said crossly. "Very well. A trap shall be sent for you after dinner. Good evening, Mr Oliphant. It is a pleasure to have met you."

When I reached the House, I told Sybil of my arrangement. For the first time since my arrival she smiled. "It's very kind of him, but I am afraid he won't do much good. Bob will frighten him away."

"I fancy he won't. The man is strong in his self-confidence and remarkably dense. He'll probably exasperate Bob into sanity. In any case I'll be back by Friday morning."

As I drove away the trap arrived at the door, bringing Mr Oliphant and his portmanteau.

. . . . . .

The events of the next twenty-four hours, during which I was travelling in the Scotch express or transacting dreary business in my chambers, are known only from the narrative of the minister. He wrote it out some weeks after at my request, for I wished to have all the links in the tale. I propose to give the gist of it, as he wrote it, stripped of certain reflections on human life and an inscrutable Providence, with which he had garnished it.

Narrative of the Reverend Mr Oliphant.

I arrived at the House of More at a quarter-past eight on the Wednesday evening. The family had dined early, as Mr Grey was leaving for London, and when I arrived I was taken to the library, where I found Mr Ladlaw. I had not seen him for some time, and thought him looking pale and a little haggard. He seemed glad to see me, and made me sit down in a chair on his left and draw it up close to him. I wondered at his manner, for though we had always been on good terms he had never admitted me to

any close intimacy. But now he was more than amiable. He made me ring for toddy, and though he refused to taste it himself, he pressed the beverage on me. Then he gave me a large cigar, at which I trembled, and finally he said that we should play at picquet. I declined resolutely, for it is part of my conscience to refuse to join in any card games; but he made no trouble, and indeed in a moment seemed to have forgotten his proposition.

The next thing he did startled my composure. For he asked abruptly, "Do you believe in a living personal Devil, Oliphant?"

I was taken aback, but answered that to the best of my light I did not.

"And why not?" he asked sharply.

I explained that it was an old, false, anthropomorphic fiction, and that the modern belief was infinitely more impressive. I quoted the words of Dr Rintoul, one of our Church leaders. I am sorry to say that Mr Ladlaw's words were, "Dr Rintoul be d—d!"

"Who the deuce are you to change the belief of centuries?" he cried. "Our forefathers believed in him. They saw him at evening slinking about the folds and peat-stacks, or wrapped up in a black gown standing in the pulpits of the Kirk. Are we wiser men than they?"

I answered that culture had undoubtedly advanced in our day.

Mr Ladlaw replied with blasphemous words on modern culture. I had imagined him to be a gentleman of considerable refinement, and I knew he had taken a good degree at college. Consequently, I was disagreeably surprised at his new manner.

"You are nothing better than an ignorant parson,"—these were his words,—"and you haven't even the merits of your stupid profession. The old Scots ministers were Calvinists to the backbone, and they were strong men—strong men, do you hear?—and they left their mark upon the nation. But your new tea-meeting kind of parson, who has nothing but a smattering of bad German to commend him, is a nuisance to God and man. And they don't believe in the Devil! Well, he'll get them safe enough some day."

I implored him to remember my cloth, and curb his bad language.

"I say the Devil will get you all safe enough some day," he repeated.

I rose to retire in as dignified a manner as possible, but he was before me and closed the door. I began to be genuinely frightened.

"For God's sake, don't go!" he cried. "Don't leave me alone. Do sit down, Oliphant, like a good chap, and I promise to hold my tongue. You don't know how horrible it is to be left alone."

I sat down again, though my composure was shaken. I remembered Mr Grey's words about the strange sickness.

Then Mr Ladlaw fell into

an extraordinary moodiness. He sat huddled up in his chair, his face turned away from me, and for some time neither of us spoke a word. I thought that I had seriously offended him, and prepared to apologise, so I touched his left shoulder to attract his attention. Instantly he jumped to his feet, screaming, and turned on me a face of utter terror. I could do nothing but stare at him, and in a second he quieted down and returned to his seat.

Then he became partially sane, and murmured a sort of excuse. I thought that I would discover what truth lay in Mr Grey's singular hypothesis. I did not ask him bluntly, as an ordinary man would have done, what was his malady, but tactfully, as I thought then, I led the conversation to demoniacal possession in the olden time, and quoted Pellinger's theory on the Scriptural cases. He answered with extraordinary vehemence, showing a childish credulity I little expected from an educated man.

"I see that you hold to the old interpretation," I said pleasantly. "Nowadays, we tend to find the solution in natural causes."

"Heavens, man!" he cried. "What do you mean by natural? You haven't the most rudimentary knowledge of nature. Listen to me, and I will tell you something."

And with this he began a long rambling account of something which I could not understand. He talked much about a name which sounded like Canaan, and then he wandered to another subject and talked about Proserpina, whom I remembered from Mr Matthew Arnold's poem. I would have thought him trying to ridicule me, if I had not seen his face, which was white and drawn with pain; and, again, I would have thought him drunk, but for his well-known temperate habits. By-and-by even my nerves, which are very strong, began to suffer. I understood fragments of his talk, and the understanding did not reassure me. It was poisonous nonsense, but it had a terrible air of realism. He had a queer habit of catching at his heart like a man with the heart disease, and his eyes were like a mad dog's I once saw, the pupil drawn to a pin-point with fear. I could not bear it, so I tried to break the spell. I offered, against my conscience, to play a card game, but his face showed that he did not understand me. I began to feel a sort of languor of terror. I could hardly rise from my chair, and when at last I got up the whole room seemed haunted. I rushed to the bell and rang it violently, and then tried to open the door. But he was before me again, and gripped my arm so fiercely that I cried out between the pain and my dread of him.

"Come back!" he cried hoarsely. "Don't leave me alone. For God's sake, Oliphant!"

Just then the man-servant opened the door, and found the two of us standing like lunatics. I had the sense to

save the situation, and I asked him to bring more coals for the fire. Then as soon as he turned to go, I stepped out of the open door before Mr Ladlaw could prevent me.

The hall seemed empty, but to my surprise I found Mrs Ladlaw sleeping in a chair by the fire. I did not like to waken her, but I was at my wits' end with fright. If I had known the way to the kitchen, I should have sought the servants' company. I ran down a passage, but it seemed to end in a blind wall, and in a great fear I turned and ran upstairs. But the upper lobbies seemed to be unlit, and I was turning back when I heard Ladlaw's voice behind me. It was muffled and queer, and the sound drove me into the darkness. When I turned a corner, to my relief I saw a lamp burning on a table and recognised my bedroom door. Here was sanctuary at last, and I ran in and shut it behind me.

My nerves were so shaken by the evening's performances that I found it impossible to get to sleep. I sat up the better part of the night by the fire, and smoked several cigarettes, which in ordinary circumstances I should never have dared to do in a strange bedroom. About four o'clock, I think, I dozed off in my chair, and awoke about nine, very stiff and cold, to find Ladlaw laughing at me in the doorway.

I was at first so confused that I did not remember what had scared me the night before. Then, as it came back to me, I was amazed at my host's appearance. He looked fresh and well, and in excellent spirits. He laughed immoderately when he found I had not gone to bed.

"You do look cheap," he said. "Breakfast's in half an hour. You will feel better when you have had a tub."

I bathed reluctantly, feeling ill and bitterly cold; but I was comforted by a good breakfast. Then I had an opportunity of talking to Mrs Ladlaw. As I remembered her, she had been full of gaiety, and even, I thought, a little frivolous; but now she was so pale and silent that I pitied her sincerely. I began to feel an intense dislike of her husband, partly for the fright he had given me the night before, and partly for the effect his silliness seemed to be having on his wife. The day was a fine one, but after breakfast he showed no intention of going out. I expected to be asked to shoot, a sport which I sometimes try; but he never spoke of it, and insisted on my coming to the billiard-room. As we were leaving the table Mrs Ladlaw touched my arm, and asked me in a low tone if I would promise to stay all day with her husband. "I want to go down to Morefoot," she said, "and you know he cannot be left alone." I promised willingly, for in the daylight Mr Ladlaw had no terrors for me. I thought that Mrs Ladlaw looked relieved. Poor thing! she badly needed a respite.

We hung aimlessly about the place till lunch, playing a few games of billiards, and in the

intervals looking at stables and harness-rooms and the now barren gardens. At lunch Mrs Ladlaw appeared, but immediately after I heard wheels on the gravel and knew that she had gone to Morefoot. Then I began to feel nervous again. I was the only responsible person left in the place, and Mr Ladlaw might at any moment relapse into craziness. I watched his moods anxiously, and talked all the nonsense I knew to keep him in good humour. I told him stories, I talked wildly of sport, I made ridiculous jokes at which I felt myself blushing. At first he seemed amused, but soon I felt that my words were falling on deaf ears. He himself began to talk, violently, incessantly, and, I may say, brilliantly. If my memory had been better and my balance less upset, I might have made my reputation, though it would have been a reputation, perhaps, that a minister of the Gospel might well look askance at. I could have written a terrible romance from that man's babbling. Nay, I could have done more: I could have composed a new philosophy which would have cast Nietzsche in the shade for ever. I do not wish to exaggerate, but I have never been so impressed with a sense of a crazy intellectual acumen. This Mr Ladlaw, whom I had known as a good landlord and a respectable country gentleman, now appeared as a kind of horrible genius, a brilliant and malignant satyr. I was shocked and confounded, and at the same time filled with admiration. I remember that we passed through the dining-room, where there was a great marble bust of a Roman emperor, an old discoloured thing, but wonderful in its way. Mr Ladlaw stopped before it and pointed out its merits. The thing seemed simple enough, and yet after the description I fled from it as if it had been a devil. He followed me, still talking, and we found ourselves in the library.

I remember that I suggested tea, but he scarcely heeded me. The darkness was falling, Mrs Ladlaw had not returned, and I felt horribly uncomfortable. I tried to draw him away from the room which I feared, but he made no sign of understanding. I perceived that the malady of the last night was returning. I hated that library, with its low fire, its ghastly white books, and its dreary outlook. I picked up one volume, and it was lettered on the back 'Sancti Adelberti Certamina.' I dropped it, only to feel Mr Ladlaw clutching my right arm and dragging me to one of those horrible armchairs.

"The night is coming on, the old Nox Atra that the monks dreaded. Promise me that you won't go away."

I promised feebly, and prayed for Mrs Ladlaw's return. I suggested that the lamps should be lit. He rose and tried to light the hanging central one, and I noticed how his hands trembled. His awkwardness upset the thing, and it fell with a crash on the floor. He jumped back with a curious scream like an animal.

I was so miserably scared that I had not the heart to do the work for him, so we sat on in the darkness. Any sound from the out-of-doors would have comforted me, but the whole world was as silent as death. I felt that a little more would drive me mad, and the thought roused me to make a final effort after safety. In spite of all my promises I must get away. A man's first duty was to himself, and the hour had come for me. I thought with longing of my little bare manse and my solemn housekeeper. And yet how was I to escape, for this man was the stronger, and he would never let me go.

I begged him to come into the hall, but he refused. Then I became very cunning. I suggested that we should go to the door and receive Mrs Ladlaw. He did not know that she had gone, and the news made him so nervous that he accepted my proposal. He caught my arm as before, and, leaning heavily upon me, went into the hall. There was no one about, and the fire had died down; but at the far end there was a pale glimmer from the glass door. We opened it and stood on the top step, looking over the dark lawns. Now was the time for an effort for freedom. If I could only get rid of his hand I might escape across the fields. I believed him to be too weak on his legs to follow me, and in any case I was a respectable runner. Out of doors he seemed less formidable: it was only in that haunted room that I shuddered.

I took the only way of escape which presented itself. There was a flowering-shrub in a pot on the top of the parapet. I caught this with my elbow and knocked it over, so that it broke with a clatter on the stone. As I expected, he screamed and jumped aside, letting go my arm for one instant. The next I was down the steps and running hard across the lawns to the park beyond.

For a little I heard him stumbling after me, breathing heavily and with little short cries. I ran with the speed of fear, for till I was within my own doors I could feel no security. Once I turned, and there he was, a field behind me, running with his head down like a blind dog. I skirted the village, broke through the little fir plantation, and came out on the highway. I saw the light from Jean's little window, and it was like a beacon of hope. In a few minutes I was at the door, and my servant stared as I rushed in, without hat or overcoat, and wet with perspiration. I insisted on barring the doors, and bolting and shuttering every window. Then I had the unusual luxury of a fire in my bedroom, and there I supped, and sat till I fell asleep.

End of Mr Oliphant's Statement.

CHAPTER III.—EVENTS ON THE UPLANDS.

I returned from town by the night express, which landed me at Borrowmuir about seven on the Friday morning. To my surprise there was no dog-cart to meet me, as had been arranged, and I was compelled to hire from the inn. The omission filled me with forebodings. Things must have gone badly at More in my absence, or the careful Sybil would never have forgotten. I grudged the time occupied in that weary drive. The horse seemed intolerably slow, the roads unaccountably steep. It was a sharp morning, with haze on the fields and promise of bright sunshine at midday; but, tired as I was with my two days' journey, I was in the humour to see little good in my case. I was thankful when we drew up at the house-door, and, cold and stiff, I hobbled up the steps.

The door was open, and I entered. The hall was empty, there was no sign of any servant, and all the doors were wide to the wall. I tried one room after another without success. Then I made my voice heard in that place. I shouted for Ladlaw, and then I shouted for Sybil. There came no answer, and in despair I rushed to the kitchen wing. There I found a cluster of frightened maids, and by dint of much questioning learned the truth.

Ladlaw, it seemed, had disappeared from the house about a quarter-past six on the previous night. The minister had decamped and found sanctuary in the manse; but there was no trace of the other. Sybil had gone to Morefoot in the afternoon, and, returning about half-past six, found her husband gone. She had been distracted with anxiety, had gone to the manse, where she found Mr Oliphant in a state of nervous collapse and quite unable to make any coherent statement, and had then roused some of the neighbouring shepherds and organised a search-party. They had searched all night, but so far no word had come of the result. Meanwhile, Sybil, utterly wearied and a little hysterical, was in bed, sleeping, for her anxiety of the past week had culminated in a sort of deep languor, which in the circumstances was the best thing that could have happened. There was no question of wakening her; but, as I snatched a hurried breakfast, it seemed to me that I must at once follow the search. They were to meet in the morning at a farm called Mossrigging, beneath a hill of the same name, and if I went there I might get word of them. In the meantime I must interview Mr Oliphant.

I found him in bed, unshaven, and very hollow about the eyes. He told me a lame story, and indeed his fright was so palpable that I had not the heart to blame him. But I insisted that he should get up and come with me, for every man would be needed to search those mossy uplands. I was dog-tired, sleepy,

and irritable, and yet I must go: why should not this man, who had had his night's rest?

He made some feeble objection; but he had a conscience of his own and rose obediently. We set out to the nearest part of the moor, he in his clergyman's garb, and I in a dark suit and a bowler; and I remember thinking how oddly unsuited was our dress for this stalking-game. I was wretchedly anxious, for I liked Ladlaw, and God alone knew where he might have got to in the night. There were deep bogs and ugly old pit-shafts on the moor, and there were ravines with sheer red sides. At any moment we might find tragedy, and I dreaded the report of the searchers at Mossrigging. When we left the road, we followed an old cart-track up a shallow glen, where stood some curious old stone chimneys, which had been built by a speculator who hoped to make a fortune from peat. The sun was beginning to break through the haze, and miles of low moorland were disclosed to left and right. But the hills in front were still cloudy, and we were close on the cottage before we knew its whereabouts. It stood high in a crinkle of hill, with a wide prospect north and east to the sea, and as I turned I saw Morebrig smoking clear in the autumn light, and the chimneys of the House above the fir-trees. Out on the waters three ships were sailing like toy-boats, a reminder of the bustling modern life beyond this antique place of horrors.

The house was full of men, devouring their morning porridge. They were shepherds of the neighbourhood, and two boys from the village, as well as John Ker, the head-keeper from More. One man, Robert Tod by name, answered my unspoken question. "We havena gotten him, but we've gotten his whereabouts. We got a glisk o' him about six this mornin' on the backside o' the Lowe Moss. I kent him fine by the way he ran. Lord, but he was souple! Nane o' us could come within a hunner yairds o' him. We'll hae to wyse him gently, sir, and some o' us 'ill hae to tak a lang cast round the hill."

I had no ambition to "tak a lang cast round the hill"; but these men had been abroad all night, and I and the minister must undertake the duty. Tod agreed to come with us, and the shaggy silent men of the party expounded the plan of campaign. The Lowe Moss was impassable on one side, on another bounded by a steep hill-shoulder, and on the others by two narrow glens. They would watch the glens; we three should make a circuit and come back over the hill, driving the fugitive before us. Once enclosed between the moss and our three parties, he should be an easy capture. I implored them to go to work gently, for I feared that he might be driven into the bog. They shook their heads and laughed: it was all a kind of crazy sport to them, and their one idea was to carry out their orders.

I confess I was desperately tired before we had forded the

upper waters of the More, crossed the Redscaurhead, and looked over the green pasture-lands to the south. It was a most curious sight; for whereas one side of the range was rough and mossy and hideous with red scaurs, the other was a gentle slope with sweet hill-grass and bright shallow waters. It was a new country where the old curse could not reign, and an idea took possession of me that if once Ladlaw came into the place he would be healed of his malady. The air seemed clearer, the sky softer, the whole world simple and clean. We fetched a circuit down one of the little streams till we came to the back of the hill which on its face is called Mossrigging. I was abominably tired, but in better spirits. As for the minister, he groaned occasionally, but never spoke a word.

At the foot we separated to the distance of half a mile, and began the ascent. So far there was no sign of our man. Tod was on the far east, I was in the centre, and Mr Oliphant took the west. I cannot profess to remember exactly all the incidents of that climb. I was too stupid with sleep and exertion, and the little distant figures of my companions danced in a kind of haze. The ascent was simple, —short grass, varied by short heather, with at wide intervals a patch of shingle. The shepherd walked with an easy swing, the minister stumbled and groaned, while I, in sheer bravado and irritation at my weakness, kept up a kind of despairing trot. The Devil and Ladlaw combined might confront me, but I was too tired to care. Indeed, in a little I had forgotten all about the purpose of our quest.

Then, quite suddenly, almost at the summit, in a little hollow of the ridge, I saw our man. He was sitting on the ground, directly in the minister's line, and his head was sunk on his breast. I remember being taken with a horrid thought that he was dead, and quickened my trot to a run. Meanwhile the minister was approaching very near, but apparently quite unconscious of his presence. His eyes were in the ends of the earth, and he ambled along with no purpose in the world.

What happened rests mainly on my authority; but Robert Tod, shepherd in Nether Mossrigging, is ready to swear to the essentials. Mr Oliphant stumbled on into the hollow till he was within ten yards of the sitting figure. Ladlaw never moved; but the subtle influence which tells of human presence came suddenly upon the minister's senses, for he lifted his eyes and started. The man was still scared to death, and he naturally turned to run away, when something happened which I cannot well explain. Ladlaw was still sitting with his head on his breast, and yet it was clear to my mind that Ladlaw had somehow risen and was struggling with the minister. I could see the man's wrists strained and twisted as if in a death-grapple, and his white face reddening with exertion. He seemed to be held round the middle, for his feet tottered several times, and once he

lurched to the left side, so that I thought he was thrown. And yet he was only battling with the air, for there was Ladlaw sitting quietly some yards from him.

And then suddenly the contest seemed to cease. Mr Oliphant ran straight past the sitting man and over the brow of the hill. Surprise had held Tod and myself motionless. Now the spell was broken, and from our several places we ran towards Ladlaw. I heard the shepherd's loud voice crying, "Look at Oliphant! Oliphant's no wise!" and I thought I heard a note of sardonic mirth. In any case, it was the minister he was after, for a moment later he disappeared down the further slope.

Mr Oliphant might go where he pleased, but my business was with my friend. I caught Ladlaw by the shoulder and shook him fiercely. Then I pulled him to his feet, let him go, and he rolled over. The sight was so comic that I went into a fit of nervous laughter; but the shock seemed to have restored his wits, for he opened sleepy eyes and regarded me solemnly. I do not propose to analyse my reasons, but I was conscious that it was the old Ladlaw who was looking at me. I knew he was healed of his malady, but how I knew it I do not know. He stuck both fists into his eyes like a sleepy child. Then he yawned, and looked down ruefully at soaked, soiled, and ragged clothing. Then he looked reproachfully at me.

"What's up?" he asked. "Stop that hideous row and tell me what has happened. Have I had an accident?"

Then I spoke cunningly. "Nothing much. A little bit of a fall, but you'll be all right soon. Why, you look better already." And again I went into a fit of laughter.

He grew wholesomely cross. "Oh, don't be a confounded jackass!" he cried. "I feel as if I hadn't slept for a week, and I'm hungry and thirsty."

He swallowed the contents of my flask, and wolfed my sandwiches in a disgusting way. Then he proposed that we should go home. "I'm tired, and I'm sick of shooting for the day. By the bye, where's my gun?"

"Broken," I said, "broken in the fall. The keeper is going to look after it." And with the aid of my arm he began with feeble steps his homeward journey.

. . . . . .

The minister—this is the tale of Robert Tod and his colleagues—ran down the precipitous part of Mossrigging like a thing inspired. Tod, labouring heavily in his wake, declared that he went down the hillside like a loose stone, slipping, stumbling, yet never altogether losing his feet, and clearing dangers solely by the grace of God. As he went, said the men, he made clutches at the air, and his face was the face of one distraught. They ran together from their different places to intercept him on the edge of the bog, for at first they thought he was Ladlaw. When they saw their mistake they did not stop, for Tod was making frantic

signals for pursuit. John Ker, the More keeper, was nearest, and he declared afterwards that he never approached a business so unwillingly. "I wad hae grippit a wild stot or a daft staig suner nor yon man," he said. But the business was too public for sheer cowardice. John assaulted him on the left flank while the other attacked in front, and John was bowled over like a ninepin. It was not the minister, he said, but something else, something with an arm two yards long, which flew out like a steam-hammer. But the others were more fortunate. One caught Mr Oliphant's right arm, another hung on to the flaps of his coat, while a third tripped him up gallantly, till the whole body of them rolled on the ground. Then ensued an indescribable fray. Tod got a black eye from some unknown source, and one of the boys lost several front teeth. Howls of rage filled the moorland air, and all the while, they declared, the minister was praying with an unction which was never heard in the kirk. "Lord, give me peace!" he cried. "Lord, take the thing away!" and then again, "Get thee behind me, Satan!"

The end came very suddenly, for the company rolled into the bog. The minister, being lowest, saved the others, but he floundered in the green slime up to his middle. The accident seemed to inspire sobriety. He ceased his prayers, his face lost its horror, and took on a common human fear. Then Tod and his friends laboured heroically to rescue him, and all the while, they declared, something was pommelling them and bruising them, and they showed for long black marks on their bodies. Slowly they raised Mr Oliphant from the slough, and on a bridge of coats he crept back to solid land. And then something happened which was the crowning marvel of the business. It was a still sharp day; but suddenly there came a wind, hot and harsh, and like nothing they had ever known. It stung them like nettles, played for a moment in their midst, and then in a kind of visible cloud passed away from them over the bog in the direction of the Red Loch. And with the wind went the Thing which had so long played havoc in the place; and the men were left with an unkempt figure, coated with slime and shivering with fright, but once more the sane and prosaic Mr Oliphant, the minister of the parish of More.

. . . . . .

We got Ladlaw and the minister back to the house with much trouble, for both were weak on their legs, and one was still in a pitiable fright. The two kept eyeing each other, one with a sort of disgusted amusement, the other with a wondering fear. The shepherds were mystified; but they were matter-of-fact beings, who, having fulfilled their orders, gave no more thought to the business. The wounded nursed their bruises and swore cheerfully, and the boy with the broken teeth whistled his complaints. A good dinner restored them to

humour, and the last I saw was Ker and Tod going over the Odyssey of their adventures to a circle of critical spectators.

When Ladlaw and the minister had washed and fed, and sat smoking in the library, I went to talk to Sybil. I have often wondered how much she understood. At any rate she took my word that the trouble had passed, and in a fit of tears thanked me for my labours. Then she said she would go to her husband, and I led her to the library, where the two heroes were smoking the pipe of peace.

Ladlaw greeted her cheerily as if nothing had happened. "I feel a bit shaken," he said, "but I'll be all right after a night's rest. You needn't be nervous, Sib. By the bye, Harry, where's that gun?"

Then he wandered round the room, casting an unfriendly eye on his new acquisitions. "Look here! Somebody has been playing the fool in this place. I can't see a single Badminton, and where did this stuff come from?" And he tapped a row of books in old vellum. "I never remember the things before. St Adelbert! Who on earth was he? Why, any one who came in suddenly and did not know me might think I was a minor poet. I wish you'd tell Harrison to clear all this truck away."

The minister sat by the fire and said nothing. The marvellous had intruded upon his easy life and spoiled the balance. I was sorry for the man as I thanked him in a low tone and asked how he felt.

The words came from between chattering teeth.

"I am getting b-better," he said, "but I have had a terrible sh-shock, — I am a Christian man and I have been tempted. I thought we lived in a progressive age, but now I know that we d-d-don't. And I am going to write to Dr Rintoul."

JOHN BUCHAN.

A RECONNAISSANCE.

So often the camp rumour ran, "an attack is expected to-night," so often we had moved out before dawn prepared for fighting, and nothing had happened, that when we rode out of camp on a certain dark morning of April there were none of us but would have said the odds were against our receiving that day our baptism of fire. The horses stood saddled in their lines, and the men in camp were already mounting as the cloaked forms of the outlying picket came tramping in through the gloom. For them there was no time even to break a biscuit or swallow a mug of coffee before mounting with the rest. A friendly hand thrust a slab of chocolate into mine, and that was my breakfast. Moving out of the lines and forming column, we rode up a slope and down into a hollow barred with lines of fire, where an infantry battalion had bivouacked; and here, in a broad gully debouching upon the open downs, we sat waiting till the other units of the brigade were ready to march. The stars were fading, a cold little breeze was rustling the stiff brown grass, and the smell of the dawn was in our nostrils. It was almost broad day when at length we issued from the gully and began to advance in column of sections in open order. We of the rear section rode through an intricate pattern of markings like watered silk, made in the dew-laden grass by the horses in our front. We had trotted more than a mile when general line was formed, and we galloped to our station on the right of the section in front of us.

We are to occupy a kopje to the right of the position. Reaching it, we can see the long line of the brigade ascending an irregular ridge stretching to the left. Our dismounted files are spread over the face of the kopje. Before us is a natural glacis some 800 or 900 yards in width; beyond it the ground rises in a succession of folds towards a long and lofty range about two miles away. The gunners of the pom-pom battery are the first to see the enemy, and open fire from rising ground in rear of our right centre upon points in the opposite ridges. "Rap, rap, rap, rap, rap, rap," says a pom-pom—six raps is the usual number on our side—and away there in the blue distance one sees with the glass six puffs of smoke near together, and, listening, hears the six reports as the vicious little shells burst. The third or fourth series of raps rewards the gunners and proves their sight and aim correct, for the glass shows rapidly moving black dots, which we knew to be the enemy shifting to a safer place.

They are before us at last. Those black dots are the men we have come so far to see. Among them may be the man who sold us fowls the day before yesterday, or the husband of

the blue-eyed woman with plaited hair who gave me a drink of milk. But there is no doubt about it: the Boers we have seen until now have been either prisoners under guard or men who have made their submission, and are, ostensibly, loyal; but these are "the enemy." The others were to be looked at, chatted with. These fellows are to be shot.

A crackle of rifle-fire begins along our kopje; the brand-new Lee-Metfords are being tried at long range. Bullets sing over our heads, swish into the grass, or kick up tiny puffs of dust. From the higher ground behind the enemy we see their guns — three 15-pounders, we think — begin sending shell in the direction of our pom-poms. Aimed high at first, they go screaming overhead, and throw up red dust-clouds far in our rear. And now the pom-poms are warming to the work — ten, twelve, twenty raps in a series they utter, and the puffs of smoke come thick and fast among the skurrying black dots.

Shells fall in rapid succession among a section of ours still mounted. One bursts between two horses, both of which are killed, while one of the riders gets eight pieces into his leg and side; the other is untouched. Through the hostile fire a handful of our scouts come quite slowly, holding in his saddle one of their number shot through the groin. Under a tree behind our kopje he is lifted down. He is conscious, and speaks. "Look out, my spur is caught in the saddle," he says. They lay him on the ground. There is a look on his face that recalls that haunting face of the dark-haired soldier in the corner of the square in "Quatre Bras" — seen once, many years ago, and never forgotten. The surgeon speaks cheerily, but one knows that our comrade lies in the shadow of death.

The Boer guns have found our pom-poms, and they are to be moved. A section of ours is to go as escort. We gallop off to the left, wondering why our side has no field-guns in action. From our left rear, far away — miles, we think — comes now at longish intervals a report which some one says is that of a British "four-point-seven" naval gun. It is unlike the sound of the other guns — a long crescendo roar. Where the shells are falling, or what they are aimed at, are things beyond our ken.

As we ride up in rear of the pom-poms a shell takes the ground just in front of the horse of the battery commander. Man and horse roll over in a cloud of red dust, but both rise unhurt, and the officer—a subaltern—speaks to ours while brushing the red dust off his jacket. He wants a well-mounted man to carry a note to the brigadier, who is "somewhere over there, in the firing-line." I am selected, and ride off with the note, down one long slope and up another, towards the crackling, waving line, which is now beyond the crest of the next ridge.

I ride successively towards several men, who look like orderlies, galloping rearward;

but a wave of the arm towards the front, and "Somewhere over there," is all I can get from them about the brigadier. I ride on. Three or four riderless horses pass me, making for the rear. A saddled and bridled beast galloping at large is always a disquieting sight; but really, so far, one might almost persuade oneself that this was a field-day. Presently the ridge in front of me is topped by a line of heads, and here come lines of mounted infantry, regulars, retiring at a trot, in extended order. I thread my way through their ranks, again unsuccessful in my inquiries for the brigadier. As I crest the ridge the frequency of the bullets that pass me or strike near me is a reminder that I am "on the skyline." I learn to recognise the differences of sound. Some bullets pass the ear with a buzz like an angry insect; those that fly lower and make one think about one's horse's legs have a sound of kisses.

A man gallops past on a clumsy black Argentine which seems to be beyond his control. His helmet sways by the strap at the back of his neck, and upon a near view his face is deadly pale, with wide, staring eyes that see nothing. Two men lie near each other in the grass, in attitudes like those of sleeping tramps in a park. The retirement continues.

I gallop along the ridge towards the right of the firing-line, and have just got on the track of our restless brigadier, and sighted him in the distance, when I meet my gunner-officer again, who says it is now unnecessary to deliver the note.

Beyond the pom-pom battery, which is firing incessantly, I find my section, and leave my mare with the other led horses in partial shelter. The men are lying with their heads downhill about thirty yards down the "natural glacis," and firing occasionally as opportunity offers. I lie down behind a little bush, low enough to shoot over from the prone position.

And now begins my active share in the fighting. Our pom-poms, admirably served, are continually forcing the enemy to change their position, and as they move they become visible. When they move, too, their fire naturally slackens. Bullets strike thick and fast around us, and it is a comfort to know, as one pulls the trigger, that one is helping to give those men opposite as uncomfortable a time as they are giving us. We are fortunate in having the pom-poms so close to us, for some one in the battery keeps singing out the range. I go on filling and emptying my magazine. An officer rides up behind us and calls out, "Try nine hundred, and keep up a hot fire on that ridge — that clump of bushes." We do so.

Not a man of us has ever been under fire until to-day. Therefore it would be interesting to know what is passing in the minds of these musketeers as they lie there in the bright sunshine amid the hum of the bullets and the impatient thumping of the pom-poms.

For my own part, consciousness seems to be dual. A part of me, as it were, goes on performing the actions of looking through the glass, loading, and firing, while the other half is at liberty to think. I am even conscious of a desire to take hold of the sensations of the moment, and retain such an impression of them as may be afterwards written. Deep down is a satisfactory feeling of having in some sort passed a test. "I am glad I am not a coward." That is to say, "I am glad to have proved to myself that I am less afraid of being shot than of running away." But I am conscious of something wanting. "Where is the joy, the lust, the drunkenness of battle, which by all tradition should now possess us. This business leaves me cold."

Presently there comes the stage of being more thoroughly alive to what is going on around us. The fire of our line to the left of the pom-poms seems to have died away. Also, the enemy's guns are silent. The naval gun still speaks now and then in the far distance. Very far away, too, on our left, the noise of battle goes on. There is a somewhat unpleasant feeling that the rest of our brigade has retired.

A body of the enemy is seen rapidly moving toward our right. The lay of the ground allows a bit of their column to be seen as it passes a certain point. Our pom-pom fire swells to a continuous roar, and our rifles are clacking like sewing-machines. Soon the hostile fire opposite becomes faster as the enemy's front is cleared, and presently a gust of bullets from our right shows us that we are partly outflanked, and between two fires.

I wonder why I am not hit—indeed, why all of us are not hit.

At last "Retire!" is given for us and for the pom-poms—the pom-poms go first, but we stand not upon the order of our going. We get up that slope—without hurrying, if you please!—find the horses, and away.

"Gallop!" Our loosely-formed column streams away over the rolling veldt like the shadow of a summer cloud. The "questing bullets" are at our backs: it is the worst moment of the day. The thunder of hoofs, the intoxication of the pace, stir the horses' blood, and the subtle bond between beast and rider tingles the nerves of men. My mare stretches her neck and her great limbs to the gallop, and there springs into my mind understanding of the beginnings of panic.

It is to steady myself that I take a pull at her head, and trot into shelter among the stragglers. Two horses, badly hit, blunder on a few yards, and then crumple up. Two others pass me, each carrying two riders. An officer comes by at a steady canter, holding in front of him a man whose face streams with blood.

We re-form on the safe side of a wooded kopje, from the top of which, to our great joy, two field-guns immediately open upon the enemy, who had outflanked us. Had the Boers

been able to bring artillery to bear, our losses during that two-mile ride must have been heavy.

Presently we get the order to dismount. Girths are slackened, and forage-bags opened; the horses begin to champ their mixed oats and mealies. About a score of these our comrades, it seems, are gone. Pipes are lit; we lie about, chatting over the events of the day. The Major, it appears, is dead—struck early in the affair by two bullets. The case of poor F——, the man I had seen hit in the groin, is hopeless. Gradually the list grows, and we find that five at least of those who rode out with us this morning will never see another dawn. Several others have been hit. M—— has one bullet through his shoulder and another through his hip, while yet another had grazed his side, and his "emergency ration" and other contents of his haversack were smashed by two more.

The affair is over. The sound of the guns dies away, and we ride soberly back to camp, where the lines we have occupied for a few days look curiously homelike, and the familiar routine takes hold of us again.

. . . . . .

As I lay wrapped in blanket and cloak, the white, immobile stars of the African sky the stately lamps of my great bed-chamber, I pondered over the absence, in this my first sample of fighting, of any symptoms of the joy of battle. For I do not think that any of my comrades, more than I, found any pleasurable excitement in the thing. Indeed I doubt if there was any excitement at all, up to the moment of our retirement under fire; and if any man says he enjoyed the minutes that came then, I think he lies. Before I fell asleep I came to this—that the stern joy that warriors feel, needs, for its very beginnings, more than the things that touch the bodily senses and the general knowledge of the stake of honour. Noise, tumult, smoke, the sight of blood and agony—these are not enough. Hatred and anger are needed, the spirit of revenge. And the soul of the Anglo-Saxon is not easily possessed by these feelings. The sight of some advantage which must be gained at all costs, the knowledge of disaster, recent or imminent, the memory of some treachery or wrong—some one of these, or of the like of these, is needed to arouse the glad rage of battle. In the little wars of England, short ranges, in-fighting, the mellay, still survive, and call forth the brute majesty of our race. But under the conditions of the modern combat, in the fighting itself, as distinguished from the sense of achievement, there is no joy of battle.

This first action of ours seems to have been only a reconnaissance-in-force, with no idea of taking the enemy's position; so that for the quality of the "sport" a parallel case would be that of a football-match in which for one side goals were forbidden, and for the other impossible.

ERNEST DAWSON.

AT A CHINESE DINNER-PARTY.

Two days ago an oblong slip of red paper was handed in, inviting some dozen or so gentlemen to dinner at the Concordia Restaurant to-night. The names, written vertically from right to left, included ours:—

"Mi
great
old
gentleman."

We duly added the character "Chih" ("noted") below our name, in token of acceptance, and the slip was taken the round of the other *invités*.

The hour named was 4 P.M.; and, in accordance with Chinese etiquette, here we are, at six, about to set out. Even so, we shall be among the earlier arrivals.

Our servants light the great yellow lanterns, encircled with huge red characters — being our names and dignities—and carried swinging at the end of rods; my Chinese friend slips on his black satin robe, lined with white unborn lamb-skin; I struggle into my comparatively prosaic-looking ulster; the heavy iron-studded doors are unbarred, and we step out into the night.

Such absolute night! There are neither moon nor stars; nor, in the by-ways we have to traverse before reaching the main street, are there street lamps or lighted shop fronts. Not even lighted windows, for Chinese houses rarely open on to the street. Nothing but dead black, tortuous walls, along which we feel our way, almost touching on either side. Even though following close on our lantern — a veritable guiding-star in this murky wilderness — we stumble occasionally against a shivering, leprous beggar; or surprise some mangy four-legged pariah —more wolf than dog—that springs up, snarling, from under our feet; or, warned by the servant, and perhaps our own noses, just manage to circumnavigate the cesspool yawning in our path.

But a savour of adventure will to the imaginative always give a relish to such a night excursion. The mystery of the black labyrinth, where appears neither law nor light, and where each must be his own surety; the Rembrandt lantern-lights and profound back-grounds; the fantastic shadow pictures on the paper window of some hovel, the proprietor thrown in monstrous silhouette as he counts in pantomime the day's earnings of chinking copper cash; the weird cries of hawkers of roast nuts or hot dumplings, whose lanterns flicker in the distance like wills-o'-the-wisp; the deep booming of gongs, throbbing of distant drums, and tap-tapping of watchmen's rattles, —all these go to form an impression which does not quickly wear off. For the time one

has been replunged into the middle ages, if not further!

From this rabbit-warren we emerge into the busy street, brilliantly lighted, by comparison at any rate, from dozens of kerosene-lamps blazing in the shops, and as thronged and bustling as the alleys were deserted.

After a few hundred yards we again leave the main street, and by another filthy alley-way enter the famous and infamous Hou Chia Hou — the quarter of restaurants and other more equivocal houses of entertainment. We eventually turn in at a brick doorway above which is suspended a lantern bearing the characters E Ho Chêng, or Concordia Restaurant (as it may be translated).

A blank wall as usual faces the street entrance, and we have to turn through archways and round several corners before we reach the main court-yard of the establishment. Around it are private dining-rooms, low grey-brick buildings one room high, forming a lighted quadrangle. The kitchens are behind, somewhere; and the blue cotton-clad waiters hurry to and fro across the freezing court with trays full of ingeniously heated dishes. Through the paper windows comes the clatter of porcelain, peals of laughter, and, high above all, the shrieks of the *mora*-players, as they call their numbers in a rhythmic crescendo of excitement: "*Six* Ministers of State!" "The *eight* horses!!" "*Two* household happinesses!!!"

A suite of three rooms has been reserved for us at the top of the court. The centre one, into which the outer door opens, is the dining-room; and the shiny varnished table already bears a brilliant pattern of tiny red, white, and blue dishes, stands, and saucers, filled with *hors d'œuvres*. The other rooms are fitted as lounges, for smoke and chat, and are feebly illuminated with tallow dips hung in square painted glass lanterns, or fixed in iron candlesticks. The dining-table is well lighted by a kerosene hanging lamp. None of the rooms are warmed: the floors are of chill flagstones; the walls of naked plaster hung with a few scrolls; the windows of paper. The chairs, straight-backed and hard-cushioned, add to this Spartan cheerlessness. But though I am rather cold, even with my ulster on, the Chinese, dressed appropriately, find the temperature (20° Fahrenheit) just comfortable.

Some guests have already arrived, and we are duly presented to each other — I by the friendly *sobriquet* of "Tze Chin," "Son of music" (on account of a bad habit of whistling). The formula observed on first introduction is usually as follows:—

A. "Your honourable name is . . .?"

B. "My obscure patronymic is Hu. You have not honoured me (with yours) . . .?"

A. "My insignificant appellation is Ma. Your palace is situated . . .?"

B. "My wretched hovel is in the Bamboo-Bough Alley.

What" (if the other wear a moustache) "may be your honourable old age?"

(If he be still clean shaven, and therefore below forty, another form is used.)

A. "Alas, I have wasted forty-three years of life!" &c., &c.

During the quarter of an hour before dinner the guests (only male, of course) sit or stroll about, eating cakes—a favourite being a sort of hot fruit-puff (which each orders for himself)—and sipping tea. Melon seeds and salted almonds are also in demand for desultory nibbling.

When our number is complete a tremendous encounter of good manners ensues. Though the question of precedence is of course all cut and dried beforehand, each man must be polite enough to simulate an irrevocable resolve not to accept any but the lowest place until the host's "Friend, go up higher" promote him.

The table, as mentioned, is ready laid with an imposing show: a regulation number of regulation dishes, marshalled in regulation order; quaint porcelain stands filled with slices of oranges, pears, or cold goose; towers of purple quince-jelly squares, grapes, or shredded chicken-breast; saucers of shrimps, salted in their skins; and, never forgotten, the famous eggs, preserved for years in lime, and served, sliced, in beds of brown jelly (much prized for their acrid and rather ammoniacal flavour, but not usually appreciated by foreigners). Hot wine, of various brands and vintages, is served throughout. That most commonly drunk is a kind of sack or sherry negus—a yellow wine distilled from Indian corn. Being comparatively mild, it is served in small cups: ardent white spirits of rice—*samshu*—in thimblefuls. "Rose" wine is one of several varieties, flavoured with roses. (No wine is made from grapes, though they are plentiful in North China.)

When all are seated ready for the fray the host raises his cup—

"Let us drink!"

We reply, "Thanks! thanks!" then set to—with chopsticks; picking now from one dish, now from another, in piquant contrast of sweet, sour, and salt.

The first fury of the opening attack being spent, the shattered bands of *hors d'œuvres* are withdrawn, and the guests saunter into the other rooms for a whiff of tobacco or—whisper it not in Gath—a pipe of opium, *en attendant* the real repast.

Certain traditional dishes form the backbone of the feast. For instance, that most delicious of *bouillis*, shark's-fin soup, always opens the ball. It is served in a large bowl, smoking hot, and consists of a glutinous entanglement of soft fins stewed in their own liquor. The flavour is slightly salt, but exquisite. Another traditional dish appears towards the close of the feast, in the shape of a fat duck, reposing in its broth. Though boiled so thoroughly that a touch from a chopstick dissolves

it without aid of knife, the bird appears on the table with smooth white breast and limbs intact, and its nobly toothsome appearance is usually greeted with a buzz of anticipatory applause.

The remaining items of the *menu* are only curious from the mode of their selection, for each guest chooses his own dish, taking care that it shall harmonise with those already selected. One names a *salmi* of wild duck, his neighbour a dish of stewed mushrooms, and so on.

Wine, as remarked, is drunk throughout, and always hot (the Chinese eschew all cold drinks). The cups being small, their number has little effect: they cheer, but do not, as a rule, inebriate. Intoxication is extremely rare, though not, apparently, from moral considerations so much as from those of expediency, for tipsiness is not generally regarded as disgracing.

The finger-game, resembling the Italian *mora*, is played during meals, the loser swallowing as penalty a cup of wine. Two men play at a time. They show suddenly and simultaneously a certain number of the fingers of one hand, and as each thrusts them forth he shouts or squeals the number which he thinks will be the *total* of his own and his opponent's fingers. Thus, if A thinks B is going to put up three fingers, he shows four, and calls "Seven!" While B, expecting him to show two, himself shows one, and vociferates "Three!" This simple game is immensely popular throughout the eighteen provinces.

Dishes are not, as a rule, cleared away during meals, so that towards the close of dinner the table is slopped and strewn with *débris*, a veritable field of carnage. From time to time the *convives* retire to smoke, and occasionally a refresher, in the shape of a coarse towel wrung out of hot water, is handed round for the guests to successively wipe their steaming faces with—an agreeable process that has been imitated in the luxurious toilet-rooms of the States. The apotheosis of the dinner is the duck before alluded to. He is succeeded by a few sweet dishes. Finally comes a bowl or two of white boiled rice or millet porridge—to clean the palate. (In home dinners rice is the chief item; in restaurant dinners it is rigidly excluded until the finale.) *Rince-bouches* of warm water follow; then a cup of tea, and the feast is over.

The guests shortly afterwards disperse, the host apologising for the wretched dinner he has dared to set before them, the guests politely protesting—emphasising their sincerity and repletion by volleys of eructations.

When the giver of the feast leaves the restaurant, the amount of the bill is, in his honour, shrieked from court to court, as far as the street-door. A dinner such as described, for a dozen people, would cost about 30s.; would last three hours or so; and would include, great and small, more than fifty dishes.

Though Chinese *cuisine* has been credited with some utterly fabulous dishes—such as white mice served alive, which add piquancy by their squeak as they dive down the gullet — curiosities in the edible line do form a considerable list. Bird's-nest soup, for instance; a clear soup made from the refined gluten with which a certain species of swallow fasten their nests beneath the rocks; stewed "sea-slugs" — another nasty-sounding dish, but transcending in flavour the aldermanic green turtle-fat. There may be, too, on first introduction, some prejudice against fried grasshoppers. But courage in this instance is rewarded by a deliciously crisp, brown mouthful, of a delicate nutty flavour. It is a fallacy to suppose that pork forms a constant article of diet in China. As a matter of fact, it is too expensive, and is only eaten on high days and holidays, or at restaurants. Neither do milk, beef, nor game enter much into Chinese cookery, the first two being tabooed on religious grounds. Dog-flesh is eaten in the south—but rarely, and by only the poorest of the poor.

DOOM CASTLE: A ROMANCE.[1]

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER IX.—TRAPPED.

IT was only at the dawn, or the gloaming, or in night itself — and above all in the night—that the castle of Doom had its tragic aspect. In the sun of midday, as Count Victor convinced himself on the morrow of a night with no alarms, it could be almost cheerful, and from the garden there was sometimes something to be seen with interest of a human kind upon the highway on the shore.

A solitary land, but in the happy hours people were passing to and fro between the entrances to the ducal seat and the north. Now and then bands of vagrants from the heights of Glencroe and the high Rest where Wade's road bent among the clouds would pass with little or no appeal to the hospitality of Doom, whose poverty they knew; now and then rustics in red hoods, their feet bare upon the gravel, made for the town market, sometimes singing as they went till their womanly voices, even in airs unfamiliar and a language strange and guttural, gave to Count Victor an echo of old mirth in another and a warmer land. Men passed on rough short ponies; once a chariot with a great caleche roof swung on the rutless road, once a company of red-coat soldiery shot like a gleam of glory across the afternoon, moving to the melody of a fife and drum.

For the latter Mungo had a sour explanation. They were come, it seemed, to attend a trial for murder. A clansman of the Duke's and a far-out cousin (in the Highland manner of speaking) had been shot dead in the country of Appin; the suspected assassin, a Stewart of course, was on trial; the blood of families and factions was hot over the business, and the Government was sending its soldiery to convoy James Stewart of the Glen, after his conviction, back to the place of execution.

"But, *mon Dieu!* he is yet to try, is he not?" cried Count Victor.

"Oh ay," Mungo acquiesced, "but that doesna' maitter; the puir cratur is as guid as scragged. The tow's aboot his thrapple and kittlin' him already, I'll warrant, for his name's Stewart, and in this place I would sooner be ca'd Haman; I'd hae a better chance o' my life if I found mysel' in trouble wi' a Campbell jury to try me."

Montaiglon watched this little cavalcade of military

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march along the road, with longing in his heart for the brave and busy outside world they represented. He watched them wistfully till they had disappeared round the horn of land he had stood on yesterday, and their fife and drum had altogether died upon the air of the afternoon. And turning, he found the Baron of Doom silent at his elbow, looking under his hat-brim at the road.

"More trouble for the fesse checkey, Baron," said he, indicating the point whereto the troops had gone.

"The unluckiest blazon on a coat," replied the castellan of Doom; "trouble seems to be the part of every one who wears it. It's in a very unwholesome quarter when it comes into the boar's den——"

"Boar's den?" repeated Montaiglon interrogatively.

"The head of the pig is his Grace's cognisance. Clan Diarmaid must have got it first by raiding in some Appin stye, as Petullo my doer down-by says. He is like most men of his trade, Petullo; he is ready to make his treasonable joke even against the people who pay him wages, and I know he gets the wages of the Duke as well as my fees. I'm going down to transact some of the weary old business with him just now, and I'll hint at your coming. A Bordeaux wine merchant—it will seem more like the thing than the fish dealer."

"And I know a good deal more about wine than about fish," laughed Count Victor, "so it will be safer."

"I think you would be best to have been coming to the town when the Macfarlanes attacked you, killed your horse, and chased you into my place. That's the most plausible story we can tell, and it has the virtue of being true in every particular, without betraying that Bethune or friendship for myself was in any part of it."

"I can leave it all to your astuteness," said Montaiglon.

The Baron was absent, as he had suggested was possible, all day. The afternoon was spent by Count Victor in a dull enough fashion, for even Mungo seemed morose in his master's absence, perhaps overweighted by the mysteries now left to his charge, disinclined to talk of anything except the vast wars in which his ancestors had shone with blinding splendour, and of the world beyond the confines of Doom. But even his store of reminiscence became exhausted, and Count Victor was left to his own resources. Back again to his seat on the rock he went, and again to the survey of the mainland that seemed so strangely different a clime from this where nothing dwelt but secrecy and decay.

In the afternoon the traffic on the highway had ceased, for the burgh now held all of that wide neighbourhood that had leisure, or any excuse of business to transact in the place where a great event was happening. The few that moved in the sun of the day were, with but one exception, bound for the streets; the exception naturally created some wonder on the part of Count Victor.

For it was a man in the dress (to judge at a distance) of a gentleman, and his action was singular. He was riding a jet-black horse of larger stature than any that the rustics and farmers who had passed earlier in the day bestrode, and he stood for a time half-hidden among trees opposite the place where Count Victor reclined on a patch of grass among whin-bushes. Obviously he did not see Montaiglon, to judge from the calmness of his scrutiny, and assuredly it was not to the Frenchman that, after a little, he waved a hand. Count Victor turned suddenly and saw a responsive hand withdrawn from the window that had so far monopolised all his interest in Doom's exterior. Annapla had decidedly an industrious wooer, more constant than the sun itself, for he seemed to shine in her heavens night and day.

There was, in a sense, but little in the incident, which was open to a score of innocent or prosaic explanations, and the cavalier was spurring back a few minutes later to the south, but it confirmed Count Victor's determination to have done with Doom at the earliest, and off to where the happenings of the day were more lucid.

At supper-time the Baron had not returned. Mungo came up to discover Count Victor dozing over a stupid English book and wakened him to tell him so, and that supper was on the table. He toyed with the food, having no appetite, turned to his book again, and fell asleep in his chair. Mungo again came in and removed the dishes silently, and looked curiously at him—so much the foreigner in that place, so perjink in his attire, so incongruous in his lace with this solitary keep of the mountains. It was a strange face the servant turned upon him there at the door as he retired to his kitchen quarters. And he was not gone long when he came back with a woman who walked tiptoe into the doorway.

"That's the puir cratur," said he; "seekin' for whit he'll never find, like the man with the lantern playin' Ki-hoi wi' honesty."

She looked with interest at the stranger, said no word, but disappeared.

The peats sunk upon the hearth, crumbling in hearts of fire: on the outer edges the ashes grew grey. The candles of coarse mould, stuck in a rude sconce upon the wall above the mantelshelf, guttered to their end, set aslant by wafts of errant wind that came in through the half-open door and crevices of the window. It grew cold, and Montaiglon shook himself into wakefulness. He sat up in his chair and looked about him with some sense of apprehension, with the undescribable instinct of a man who feels himself observed by eyes unseen, who has slept through an imminently dangerous moment.

He heard a voice outside.

"M. le Baron," he concluded. "Late, but still in time to say good-night to the guest he rather cavalierly treats." And

he rose and went downstairs to meet his host. The great door was ajar. He went into the open air. The garden was utterly dark, for clouds obscured the stars, and the air was laden with the saline odour of the wrack below high-water mark. The tide was out. What he had expected was to see Mungo and his master, but behind the castle where they should have been there was no one, and the voices he heard had come from the side next the shore. He listened a little and took alarm, for it was not one voice but the voices of several people he heard, and in the muffled whispers of men upon some dishonest adventure. At once he recalled the Macfarlanes and the surmise of Baron Doom that in two nights they might be crying their slogan round the walls that harboured their enemy. He ran hastily back to the house, quickly resumed the sword that had proved little use to him before, took up the more business-like pistol that had damaged the beauty of the robber with the bladder-like head, and rushed downstairs again.

"*Qui est la?*" he demanded as he passed round the end of the house and saw dimly on the rock a group of men who had crossed upon the ebb. His appearance was apparently unexpected, for he seemed to cause surprise and a momentary confusion. Then a voice cried "Loch Sloy!" and the company made a rush to bear him down.

"*Ah! Messieurs les sans-culottes!*" said he, retreating hastily behind the wall of the garden where he had them *à la barrière*. As he faced round, the assailants, by common consent, left one man to do his business. He was a large, well-built man, so far as might be judged in the gloom of the night, and he was attired in Highland clothes. The first of his acts was to throw off a plaid that muffled his shoulders; then he snapped a futile pistol, and fell back upon his sword, with which he laid out lustily.

In the dark it was impossible to make pretty fighting of the encounter. The Frenchman saw the odds too much against him, and realised the weakness of his flank; he lunged hurriedly through a poor guard of his opponent's, and pierced the fleshiness of the sword-arm. The man growled an oath, and Count Victor retreated.

Mungo, with a blanched face, was trembling in the entrance, and a woman was shrieking upstairs. The hall, lit by a flambeau that Mungo held in one hand, while the other held a huge horse-pistol, looked like the entrance to a dungeon,—something altogether sinister and ugly to the foreigner, who had the uneasy notion that he fought for his life in a prison. And the shrieks aloft rang wildly through the night like something in a story he had once read, with a mad woman incarcerated, and only to manifest herself when danger and mystery threatened.

"In ye come! in ye come!" cried the servant, trembling excessively till the flambeau shook in his hand and his

teeth rattled together. "In ye come, and I'll bar the door."

It was time, indeed, to be in; for the enemy leaped at the oak as Count Victor threw it back upon its hinges, rather dubious of the bars that were to withstand the weight without.

The sight of them reassured, however: they were no light bars Mungo drew forth from their channels in the masonry, but huge black iron-bound blocks a foot thick that ran in no staples, but could themselves secure the ponderous portals against anything less than an assault with cannon.

It was obvious that the gentry outside knew the nature of this obstruction, for, finding the bars out, they made no attempt to force the door.

Within, the Count and servant looked at each other's faces—the latter with astonishment and fear, the former with dumb questioning, and his ear to the stair whence came the woman's alarms.

"The Baron tell't us there would be trouble," stammered the retainer, fumbling with the pistol so awkwardly that he endangered the body of his fellow in distress. "Black Andy was never kent to forget an injury, and I aye feared that the low tides would bring him and his gang aboot the castle. Good God! do you hear them?" he cried in terror, as the shout "Loch Sloy!" rose again outside, and the sound of voices was all about the castle.

The woman within heard it too, for her cries became more hysterical than ever.

"D—n ye, ye witch!" said the retainer, turning in exasperation, "can ye no steeck your jaw, and let them dae the howling outside?" But it was in a tone of more respect he shouted up the stair some words of assurance.

Yet there was no abatement of the cries, and Montaiglon, less—to do him justice—to serve his curiosity as to Annapla than from a natural instinct to help a distressed woman, put a foot on the stair to mount.

"Na, na! ye mauna leave me here!" cried Mungo, plucking at his sleeve.

There was something besides fear in the appeal, there was alarm of another sort that made Montaiglon pause and look the servitor in the eyes. He found confusion there as well as alarm at the furore outside and the imminent danger of the castle.

"I wish to God he was here himsel'," said Mungo helplessly, but still he did not relinquish his hold of Count Victor's sleeve.

"That need not prevent us comforting the lady," said Count Victor, releasing himself from the grasp.

"Let her alane; let her alane!" cried the servant distractedly, following the Frenchman upstairs.

Count Victor paid no heed: he was now determined to unveil a mystery that for all he knew might menace himself in this household of strange midnight happenings. The cries of the woman came from the corridor he had guessed her

chamber to occupy, and to this he hastened. But he had scarcely reached the corridor when the flambeau Mungo held was suddenly blown out, and this effectively checked his progress. He turned for an explanation.

"D—n that draught!" said Mungo testily, "it's blawn oot my licht."

"We'll have to do without it, then," said the Count, "but you must show me the way to this shrieking woman."

"A' richt," said Mungo, "mind yer feet!" He passed before the Count and cautiously led him up to the corridor where the woman's cries, a little less vehement, were still to be heard.

"There ye are! and muckle gude may it dae ye," he said, stopping at a door and pushing it open.

Count Victor stepped into darkness, thrust lightly as he went by the servant's hand, and the door closed with a click behind him. He was a prisoner! He had the humour to laugh softly at the conventionality of the deception as he vainly felt in an empty room for a non-existing door-handle, and realised that Mungo had had his own way after all. The servant's steps declined along the corridor and down the stair, with a woman's to keep them company and a woman's sobs, all of which convinced the Count that his acquaintance with Annapla was not desired by the residents of Doom.

CHAPTER X.—SIM MACTAGGART, CHAMBERLAIN.

On the roof of a high old church with as little architectural elegance as a dry-stone barn, a bell jerked by a rope from the church-yard indicated the close association of law and the kirk by ringing a sort of triumphal peal to the procession of the judges between the court-room and the inn. Contesting with its not too dulcet music blared forth the fanfare of two gorgeous trumpeters in scarlet and gold lace, tie wigs, silk stockings, and huge cocked hats, who filled the street with a brassy melody that suggested Gabriel's stern and awful judgment-summons rather than gave lightness and rhythm to the feet of those who made up the procession. The procession itself had some dreadful aspects and elements as well as others incongruous and comical. The humorous fancy might see something to smile at in the two grey-wigged bent old men in long scarlet coats who went in front of the trumpeters, prepared to clear the way if necessary (though a gust of shrewd wind would have blown them off their feet), by means of the long-poled halberts they carried; but this impression of the farcical was modified by the nature of the body whereof they were the pioneers or advance guard. Sleek magistrates and councillors in unaccustomed black suits and silver-buckled shoes, the provost ermined at their head, showed the way to the more

actual, the more dignified embodiment of stern Scots law. At least a score of wigs were there from the Parliament House of Edinburgh, a score of dusty gowns, accustomed to sweep the lobbies of the Courts of Session, swept the sand of the burgh street, and in their midst walked the representatives of that old feudal law at long-last ostensibly abandoned, and of the common law of the land. Argyll was in a demure equivalent for some Court costume, with a dark velvet coat, a ribbon of the Thistle upon his shoulder, a sword upon his haunch, and for all his sixty-six years he carried himself less like the lawyer made at Utrecht—like Justice-General and Extraordinary Lord of Session—than like the old soldier who had served with Marlborough and took the field for the House of Hanover in 1715. My Lords Elchies and Kilkerran walked on either side of him — Kilkerran with the roving bloodshot eyes of a fast liver, a ruddy, tall, sturdy man, well filling the crimson and white silk gown; Elchies, a shrivelled atomy with a hirpling walk, leaning heavily upon a rattan, both with the ominous black tri-corn hats in their hands, and flanked by a company of musketeers.

A great band of children lent the ludicrous element again to the company by following close upon its heels, chanting a doggerel song to the tune of the trumpets; the populace stood at the close-mouths or leaned over their windows looking at the spectacle, wondering at the pomp given to the punishment of a Stewart who a few years ago would have been sent to the gallows by his Grace with no more formality than might have attended the sentence of a kipper salmon-poacher to whipping at the hands of Long Davie the dempster.

His Grace was entertaining the Lords, the Counsel (all but the convict's lawyers—a lot of disaffected Jacobites, who took their food by themselves at the inn, and brusquely refused his Grace's hospitality), the magistracy, and some county friends, to a late dinner at the castle that night, and an hour after saw them round the ducal board.

If Count Victor was astonished at the squalid condition of things in the castle of the poor Baron of Doom, he would have been surprised to find here, within an hour or two's walk of it, so imposing and luxuriant a domesticity. Many lands, many hands, great wealth won by law, battle, and shrewdness, for several generations, enabled Argyll to give his castle grandeur and his table the opulence of any southern palace. And it was a bright company that sat about his board, with several ladies in it, for his duchess loved to have her sojourn in her Highland home made gay by the company of young women who might by their beauty and light hearts recall her own lost youth.

A bagpipe stilled in the hall, a lute breathed a melody from a neighbouring room, the servants in claret and yellow livery noiselessly served wine.

Kilkerran sourly pursed his

lips over his liquor, to the mingled amusement and vexation of his Grace, who knew his lordship's cellar, or even the Justiciary Vault in the town (for the first act of the Court had been to send down bins from Edinburgh for their use on circuit), contained no vintage half so good, and "Your Grace made reference on the way up to some one killed in the neighbourhood," he said, as one resuming a topic begun elsewhere.

"Not six miles from where we sit," replied the Duke, his cultivated English accent in a strong contrast with the broad burr of the Edinburgh justiciar, "and scarcely a day before you drove past. The man shot, so far as we have yet learned, was a Macfarlane, one of a small but ancient and extremely dishonest clan whose country used to be near the head of Loch Lomond. Scarcely more than half a hundred of them survive, but they give us considerable trouble, for they survive at the cost of their neighbours' goods and cattle. They are robbers and footpads, and it looks as if the fatality to one of their number near Doom has been incurred during a raid. We still have our raids, Lord Elchies, in spite of what you are saying on the bench as to the good example this part of the country sets the rest of the Highlands — not the raids of old fashion, perhaps, but more prosaic, simply thefts indeed. That is why I have had these troops brought here. It is reported to me pretty circumstantially that some of the Appin people are in the key to attempt a rescue of James Stewart on his way to the place of execution at Lettermore. They would think nothing of attempting it once he was brought the length of Benderloch, if only a law officer or two had him in charge."

"I would have thought the duty of keeping down a ploy of that kind would have been congenial to your own folk," said Elchies, drenching his nostrils vulgarly with macabaw.

Argyll smiled. "You may give us credit for willingness to take our share of the responsibility of keeping Appin in order," said he. "I should not wonder if there are half a hundred claymores with hands in them somewhere about our old barracks in Maltland. Eh! Simon?" and he smiled down the table to his chamberlain.

"Five-and-forty, to be strict," said the gentleman appealed to, and never a word more but a sudden stop, for his half-eaten plum had miraculously gone from his plate in the moment he had looked up at the Duke.

"Was't in your lands?" asked Elchies, indifferent, but willing to help on a good topic in a company where a variety of classes made the conversation anything but brisk.

"No," said Argyll, "it was in Doom, the place of a small landowner, Lamond, whose castle —it is but a ramshackle old bigging now—you may have noticed on your left as you rode round. Lamond himself is a man I have a sort of softness for, though, to tell the truth, he has forced me into more litigation than he had money

to pay for and I had patience to take any lasting interest in."

"The Baron of Doom, is that the man?" cried Elchies, dryly. "Faith, I ken him well. Some years syne he was living months at a time in the Court of Session, and eating and sleeping in John's Coffee-house, and his tale—it's a gey old one—was that the litigation was always from the other side. I mind the man weel; Baron he called himself, though, if I mind right, his title had never been confirmed by the king *in liberam baroniam*. He had no civil nor criminal jurisdiction. A black-avised man; the last time he came before me—Mr Petullo, ye were there—it was in a long-standing case o' multiplepoinding, and if I'm no' mistaken, a place ca'd Drimadry or Drimdarry, or something like that, changed hands ower the head o't."

Petullo the writer, shrinking near the foot of the table in an adequate sense of his insignificance, almost choked himself by gulping the whole glass of wine at his lips in his confusion, and broke into a perspiration at the attention of the whole company thus drawn to him. He squeaked back an unintelligible acquiescence; and completed his own torture by upsetting a compote of fruit upon his black knee-breeches.

Opposite the unhappy lawyer sat a lady of extraordinary beauty—a haughty, cold, supercilious sort of beauty, remarkable mainly from the consciousness of its display. Her profile might have been cut from marble by a Greek; her neck and bust were perfect, but her shoulders, more angular than was common in that time of bottle-shape, were carried somewhat too grandly for a gentle nature. The cruelty of her character betrayed itself in a faint irrestrainable smile at Petullo's discomfiture, all the more cruel because his eyes were entreatingly on hers as he mopped up awkwardly the consequences of his gaucherie. She smiled, but that was not the strangest part of her conduct, for at the same time she nudged with her knee the Chamberlain who sat next to her, and who had brought her into the room. To cap the marvel, he showed no surprise, but took her hint with a conspirator's enforced composure. He looked at the little, dried-up, squeaking creature opposite, and—refused the lady the gratification of a single sign of the amusement she had apparently expected. She reddened, bit her nether lip, and "Your poor man of business is in a sore plight," she whispered, using the name Sim with significant freedom.

"My dear Kate," said he quietly, "as God's my judge, I can find nothing to laugh at in the misery of a poor wretch like yon."

"That's the second time!" she whispered with well-concealed ill-humour, a smile compelled upon her face but a serpent in her voice.

"The second time?" he repeated, lifting his eyebrows questioning, and always keeping a shoulder to her—a most chilly exterior. "Your lady-

ship is in the humour to give guesses."

She gave a swift reply to some only half-heard remark by her next-hand neighbour, then whispered to him, "It's the second time you have been cruel to me to-day. You seem bent on making me unhappy, and it is not what you promised. Am I not looking nice?"

"My dear girl," said he calmly, "do you know I am not in the mood for making sport of an old fool to prove my kindness of heart to you."

"To me, Sim!" she whispered, the serpent all gone from her voice, and a warm, dulcet, caressing accent in it, while her eyes were melting with discreetly veiled love. "And I plotted so much to get beside you."

"That is the damn thing," he replied between his teeth, and smiling the while to some comment of his other neighbour, "you plot too much, my dear. I do not want to be unkind, but a little less plotting would become you more. I have no great liking for your husband, as you may guess; but there he's covered with compote and confusion, and for the look of the thing, if for no more, it would suit his wife to pretend some sympathy. In any case, for God's sake do not look at me as if I shared your amusement at his trouble. And I'm sure Kilkerran by his glowering saw you eat my plum."

Mrs Petullo cast a glance of disdain at the poor object she was bound to by a marriage for position and money, and for a moment or two gave no attention to the society of his Grace's Chamberlain, who was so suspiciously in her confidence.

Simon MacTaggart played idly with the stem of his glass. He was odd in that bibulous age, inasmuch as he never permitted wine to tempt his palate to the detriment of his brains, and he listened gravely to the conversation that was being monopolised at the head of the table round the Duke.

Women liked him. Indeed women loved this Chamberlain of Argyll readily, more for his eyes and for his voice and for some profound sense of mystery and romance in his presence than for what generally pass for good looks. He had just the history and the career and reputation that to men and women, except the very wisest and the somewhat elderly, have an attraction all unreasonable; for his youth had been stormy; he had known great dangers, tremendous misfortunes, overcoming both by a natural—sometimes spendthrift — courage; he was credited with more than one amorous intrigue, that being in high quarters was considered rather in his favour than otherwise; he was high in the esteem of families in the social scale considerably above his own (that had greatly declined since his people could first boast a coat impaled with the galley of Lorne); he was alert, mind and body, polite to punctilio, a far traveller, a good talker, and above all a lover of his kind, so that he went about with a smile (just touched a little by a poetic melancholy) for all. To the women at Argyll's table he was the most interesting man there,

and though materially the least eminent and successful, had it been his humour to start a topic of his own in opposition to his patron's, he could have captured the interest of the gathering in a sentence.

But Simon MacTaggart was for once not in the mood for the small change of conversation. Some weighty thought possessed him that gave his eye a remote quality even when he seemed to be sharing the general attention in the conversation, and it was as much resentment at the summons from his abstraction and his mood as a general disinclination to laugh at a wretch's misery on the bidding of the wretch's wife, that made him so curt to Mrs Petullo's advances. To him the dinner seemed preposterously unending. More than once his hand went to his fob with an unconscious response to his interest in the passage of the time; with difficulty he clenched his teeth upon the yawns that followed his forced smiles at the murmured pleasantries of the humble bailies and town councillors in his midst, who dared only venture on a joke of their own, and that discreetly muffled, when there was a pause in the conversation of the Duke and the Judges. And to the woman at his shoulder (the one on his left—the wife of the Provost, a little fair-haired doll with a giggling appreciation of the importance of her situation in such grand company, and a half-frightened gladness at being so near MacTaggart) he seemed more mysterious and wonderful than ever. Mrs Petullo, without looking at his half averted face, knew by the mere magnetic current from his cold shoulder that of her he was just now weary, that with his company as a whole he was bored, and that some interest beyond that noisy hall engaged his abstracted thought.

"No," the Duke was saying; "the murderer has not been discovered, nor indeed have we the most important evidence that there was a murder at all — for the body itself is as yet a mere matter of rumour, though of its existence there is no reasonable ground for doubt. It was carried off, as I am informed, by the Macfarlanes, whose anxiety to hush the affair is our main proof that they were on no honest expedition when this happened. But an affair like that gets bruited abroad: it came to us from Cairndhu that the corpse of a Macfarlane was carried past in the gloaming by some of his friends, anxious to get it smuggled through Ardkinglas with as little public notice as possible."

"*Acta exteriora indicant interiora secreta*, to somewhat misapply a well-kent maxim. The *res gestæ* show, I think, that it was a murder on the part of the robbers themselves." It was Elchies who spoke, cracking filberts the while with his great yellow teeth that gave him so cruel a look upon the bench.

"As a matter of fact," said the Chamberlain suddenly, "the man was shot by a French

pistol," and a hush fell on the table in expectation of further details, but they were not forthcoming.

"Well, I'm astonished to hear it, and I hope you know where to lay hands on the homicide," said the Duke.

"It's none of our affair—nowadays," said the Chamberlain. "And, forbye, I'm only telling a carried tale after all. There may be no more in it than the fancy of the Glen Fyne folk who told me of it."

The Duke looked at his Chamberlain, saw that the topic, so far as he was concerned, was ended, and signalled to the Duchess. It was not the custom of the time, but her Grace had introduced into her Highland court the practice of withdrawing the ladies for some time after dinner, and leaving the men to their birling of the wine, as they phrased it. Out she swept at her husband's signal with her company — Lady Strachur, Lady Charlotte, Mrs Petullo, the Provost's wife, and three or four of no greater importance to our story—and of all that were left behind, perhaps there was none but her husband, who, oddly enough (as people thought) for a duke, loved her as if he were a boy courting still, to reflect that the room was colder and less human wanting the presence of her and her bright company. His Grace, who cared for the bottle even less than did his Chamberlain, slid round the wine sun-wise for a Highlander's notion of luck; the young advocates, who bleared somewhat at the eyes when they forgot themselves, felt the menacing sleepiness and glowing content of potations carried to the verge of indiscretion; Kilkerran hummed, Petullo hawed, the Provost humbly ventured a sculduddery tale, the Duke politely listening the while to some argument of Elchies upon the right of any one who had been attacked by the Macfarlanes to use arms against them.

"It's a well-allowed principle, your Grace," he maintained. "*Arma in armatos sumere jura sinunt* — the possessor may use violence to maintain his possession, but not to recover that of which he has been deprived." He looked like a Barbary ape as his shrunk jaws masticated the kernels he fed to his mouth with shaking claws; something deep and foxishly cunning peered forth below his bristling red eyebrows. The Duke could not but look at his protruding ears and experience an old sensation of his in the company of the more animal of his fellows, that, after all, man with a little practice might easily swing among trees or burrow in the earth.

An ill-trained servant removing empty bottles left the door open behind his Grace's chair, and through it came the strains of a duet in women's voices, accompanied by the strumming of a harp. They sang an English air touching upon groves and moonlit waterfalls, Lady Charlotte lending a dulcet

second to the air of the Duchess, who accompanied them upon her instrument in sweeping chords and witching faint arpeggios. Into the room that fumed with tobacco and wine (and the Provost at the second of his tales in the ear of the advocate) the harmony floated like the praise of cherubim, and stilled at once the noisy disquisition round the board.

"Leave the door open," said the Duke to his servants, and they did so. When the song was done he felt his Jean was calling to him irresistible, and he suggested that they had better join the ladies. They rose—some of them reluctantly—from the bottles, Elchies strewing his front again with snuff to check his hiccoughs. MacTaggart, in an aside to the Duke, pleaded to be excused for his withdrawal immediately, as he felt indisposed.

"I noticed that you were gey glum to-night," said Argyll with a kind and even fraternal tone, for they were cousins and confidants as well as in a purely business relation to each other. "I'm thinking we both want some of the stimulant Elchies and the Provost and the advocate lads take so copiously."

"Bah!" said the Chamberlain; "but Sassenachs, Argyll, but Sassenachs, and they need it all. As for us, we're born with a flagon of heather ale within us, and we may be doing without the drug they must have, poor bodies, to make them sparkle."

Argyll laughed. "Good-night, then," said he, "and a riddance to your vapours before the morning's morning."

Mrs Petullo had begun a song before the Duke entered, a melody of the Scots mode, wedded to words that at that period hummed round the country. It was the one triumphant moment of her life—her musically vocal—when she seemed, even to the discriminating who dive for character below the mere skin, to be a perfect angel. Pathos, regret, faith, hope, and love, she could simulate marvellously: the last was all that was really hers, and even that was lawless. She had not half-finished the air when the Duke came into the room softly on his tiptoes, humming her refrain. A keen ear might have perceived the slightest of alterations in the tone of her next stanza; a quick eye might have noticed a shade of disappointment come to her face when her intent but momentary glance at the door revealed that some one she sought was not entering. The only ear that heard, the only eye that saw, was Kilkerran's. He was an emeritus *roué* with a cruelly cynical notion of the world, and he would have suspected without reasons. When Mrs Petullo broke down miserably in her third verse, he smiled to himself pawkily, went up to her with a compliment, and confirmed his suspicions by her first question, which was as to the Chamberlain's absence.

As for the Chamberlain, he was by now hurrying with great speed through the castle garden. Only once he slacked

his pace, and that was when the garden path joined the more open policies of the Duke, and another step or two would place a thicket of laburnums and hawthorns between him and the sight of the litten windows. He hung on his heel and looked back for a minute or two at the castle, looming blackly in the darkness against the background of Dunchuach; he could hear the broken stanza of Mrs Petullo's ballad.

"Amn't I the damned fool?" said he half-aloud to himself, with bitter certainty in the utterance. "There's my punishment: by something sham—and I ken it's sham too—I must go through life beguiled from right and content. Here's what was to be the close of my folly, and Sim MacTaggart eager to be a good man if he got anything like a chance, but never the chance for poor Sim MacTaggart!"

He plunged into the darkness of the road that led to the Maltland barracks where the fifty claymores were quartered.

CHAPTER XI.—THE WOMAN AT THE WINDOW.

Count Victor heard the woman's lamentation die away in the pit of the stair before he ceased to wonder at the sound and had fully realised the unpleasantness of his own incarceration. It was the cries of the outer assault that roused him from mere amazement to a comprehension of the dangers involved in his being thus penned in a cell and his enemies kept at bay by some wooden bars and a wooden-head. He felt with questioning fingers along the walls, finding no crevice to suggest outer air till he reached the window, and, alas! an escape from a window at that height seemed out of the question without some machinery at hand.

"I suspected the little clown's laughter," said he to himself. "The key of the mystery lies between him and this absurd Baron, and I begin to guess at something of complicity on the part of M. Bethune. A malediction on the whole tribe of mountaineers! The thing's like a play; I've seen far more improbable circumstances in a book. I am shot at in a country reputed to be well-governed even to monotony; a sombre host puzzles, a far too frank domestic perplexes; magic flutes and midnight voices haunt this infernal hold; the conventional lady of the drama is kept in the background with great care, and just when I am on the point of meeting her, the perplexing servitor becomes my jailor. But yes, it is a play; surely it is a play; or else I am in bed in Cammercy suffering from one of old Jeanne's heavy late suppers. It is then that I must waken myself into the little room with the pink hangings."

He raised the point of the sword to prick his finger, more in a humorous mood than with any real belief that it was all a dream, and dropped it fast as

he felt a gummy liquor clotting on the blade.

"*Grand Dieu!*" said he softly, "I have perhaps pricked some one else to-night into his nightmare, and I cannot prick myself out of one."

The noise of the men outside rose louder; a gleam of light waved upon the wall of the chamber, something wan and elusive, bewildering for a moment as if it were a ghost; from the clamour he could distinguish sentences in a guttural tongue. He turned to the window — the counterpart of the one in his own bedroom, but without a pane of glass in its narrow space. Again the wan flag waved across the wall, more plainly the cries of the robbers came up to him. They had set a torch flaring on the scene. It revealed the gloomy gable-end of Doom with a wild, a menacing illumination, deepening the blackness of the night beyond its influence, giving life to shadows that danced upon rock and grass. The light, held high by the man Count Victor had wounded, now wrapped to his eyes in a plaid, rose and fell, touched sometimes on the mainland showing the bracken and the tree, sometimes upon the sea to show the wave, frothy from its quarrel with the fissured rock, making it plain that Doom was a ship indeed, cast upon troubled waters, cut off from the gentle world.

But little for the sea or for the shore had Count Victor any interest; his eyes were all for the wild band who clamoured about the flambeau. They wore such a costume as he had quarrelled with on his arrival; they cried "Loch Sloy!" with something of theatrical effect, and "Out with the gentleman! out with Black Andy's murderer!" they demanded in English.

He craned his head out at the window and watched the scene. The tall man who had personally assailed him seemed to lead the band in all except their clamour, working eagerly, directing in undertones. They had brought a ladder from the shore, apparently provided for such an emergency, and placed it against the wall, with a view to an escalade. A stream of steaming water shot down upon the first who ventured upon the rounds, and he fell back with ludicrous whimperings. Compelled by the leader another ventured on the ladder, and the better to watch his performance Count Victor leaned farther out at his window, secure from observation in the darkness. As he did so, he saw for the first time that on his right there was a lighted window he could almost touch with his hand as he leaned over. It flashed upon him that here was the woman's room, and that on the deep moulding running underneath the windows he could at some little risk gain it, probably to find its door open, and thus gain the freedom Mungo had so unexpectedly taken from him. He crept out upon the ledge, only then to realise the hazards of such a narrow footing. It seemed as he stood with his hands yet grasping the sides of the window he sought to escape by, that he could never retain his balance

sufficiently to reach the other in safety. The greatest of his physical fears — greater even than that of drowning which sometimes whelmed him in dreams and on ships—was the dread of empty space; a touch of vertigo seized him; the enemy gathered round the torch beneath suddenly seemed elves, puny impossible things far off, and he almost slipped into their midst. But he dragged back his senses. "We must all die," he gasped, "but we need not be precipitate about the business," and shut his eyes as he stood up, and with feet upon the moulding stretched to gain grip of the other window. Something fell away below his right foot and almost plunged him into space. With a terrific effort he saved himself from that fate, and his senses, grown of a sudden to miraculous acuteness, heard the crumbled masonry he had released thud upon the patch of grass at the foot of the tower, apprising the enemy of his attempt. A wild commingling of commands and threats came up to him; the night seemed something vast beyond all former estimates, a swinging and giddy horror; the single star that peered through the cloud took to airy dancing, a phantom of the evening heavens; again he might have fallen, but the material, more deadly, world he was accustomed to manifested itself for his relief and his salvation. Through the night rang a pistol shot, and the ball struck against the wall but an inch or two from his head.

"*Merci beaucoup!*" he said aloud. "There is nothing like a pill," and his grasp upon the sides of the illuminated window was quite strong and confident as he drew himself towards it. He threw himself in upon the floor just in time to escape death from half a dozen bullets that rattled behind him.

Safe within, he looked around in wonder. What he had come upon was not what he had expected,—was, indeed, so incongruous with the cell next door and the general poverty of the castle as a whole that it seemed unreal; for here was a trim and tasteful boudoir lit by a silver lamp, warmed by a charcoal fire, and giving some suggestion of dainty womanhood by a palpable though delicate odour of rose-leaves conserved in pot-pourri. Tapestry covered more than three-fourths of the wall, swinging gently in the draught from the open window, a harpischord stood in a corner, a couch that had apparently been occupied stood between the fireplace and the door, and a score of evidences indicated gentility and taste.

"Annapla becomes more interesting," he reflected, but he spent no time in her boudoir; he made to try the door. It was locked; nor did he wonder at it, though in a cooler moment he might have done so. Hurriedly he glanced about the room for something to aid him to open the door, but there was nothing to suit his purpose. In his search his eye fell upon a miniature upon the mantelshelf—the work, as he could tell by its technique and its

frame, of a French artist. It was the presentment of a gentleman in the Highland dress, adorned, as was the manner of some years back before the costume itself had become discredited, with fripperies of the mode elsewhere — a long scalloped waistcoat, a deep ruffled collar, the shoes buckled, and the hair *en queue*, — the portrait of a man of dark complexion, distinguished and someways pleasant.

"The essential lover of the story," said Count Victor, putting it down. "Now I know my Annapla is young and lovely. We shall see—we shall see!"

He turned to the door to try its fastenings with his sword, found the task of no great difficulty, for the woodwork round the lock shared the common decay of Doom, and with the silver lamp to light his steps, he made his way along the corridor and down the stair. It was a strange and romantic spectacle he made moving thus through the darkness, the lamp swaying his shadow on the stairway as he descended, and he could have asked for no more astonishment in the face of his jailor than he found in Mungo's when that domestic met him at the stair-foot.

Mungo was carrying hot water in a huge kettle. He put down the vessel with a startled jolt that betrayed his fright.

"God be aboot us! Coont, ye gied me a stroke there."

"Oh, I demand pardon!" said Count Victor, ironically. "I forgot that a man of your age should not be taken by surprise."

"My age!" repeated Mungo, with a tone of annoyance. "No' sae awfu' auld either. At my age my grandfaither was a sergeant i' the airmy, and married for the fourth time."

"Only half his valour seems to run in the blood," said Count Victor. Then, more sternly, "What did you mean by locking me up there?"

Mungo took up the kettle and placed it to the front of him, with some intuition that a shield must be extemporised against the sword that the Frenchman had menacing in his hand. The action was so droll and futile that, in spite of his indignation, Count Victor had to smile; and this assured the little domestic, though he felt chagrin at the ridicule inferred.

"Jist a bit plan o' my ain, Coont, to keep ye oot o' trouble, and I'm shair ye'll excuse the leeberty. A bonny-like thing it wad be if the maister cam' hame and foun' the Macfarlanes had picked ye oot o' Doom like a wulk oot o' its shell. It wisna like as if ye were ane o' the ordinar garrison, ye ken; ye were jist a kin' o' veesitor——"

"And it was I they were after," said Count Victor, "which surely gave me some natural interest in the defence."

"Ye were safer to bide whaur ye were; and hoo ye got oot o't 's mair than I can jalouse. We hae scalded aff the rogues wi' het water, and if they're to be keepit aff, I'll hae to be unco gleg wi' the kettle."

As he said these words he saw, apparently for the first

time, with a full understanding of its significance, the lamp in Count Victor's hands. His jaw fell; he put down the kettle again helplessly, and, in trembling tones, "Whaur did ye get the lamp?" said he.

"*Ah, mon vieux!*" cried Count Victor, enjoying his bewilderment. "You should have locked the lady's door as well as mine. You're a poor warder not to think of the possibilities in two cells so close to each other."

"Cells!" cried Mungo, very much disturbed. "'Cells!' quo' he," looking chapfallen up the stairway, as if for something there behind his escaped prisoner.

"And now you will give me the opportunity of paying my respects to your no doubt adorable lady."

"Eh!" cried Mungo, incredulous. A glow came to his face. He showed the ghost of a mischievous smile. "Is't that way the lan' lies? Man, ye're a dour birkie!" said he; "but a wilfu' man maun hae his way, and, if naething less'll dae ye, jist gang up to yer ain chaumer, and ye'll find her giein' the Macfarlanes het punch wi' nae sugar till't."

The statement was largely an enigma to Count Victor, but he understood enough to send him up the stairs with an alacrity that drove Mungo, in his rear, into silent laughter. Yet the nearer he came to his door the slower grew his ascent. At first he had thought but of the charming lady, the vocalist, and the recluse. The Baron's share in the dangerous mystery of Doom made him less scrupulous than he might otherwise have been as to the punctilio of a domestic's introduction to one apparently kept out of his way for reasons best known to his host; and he advanced to the encounter in the mood of the adventurer, Mungo in his rear beholding it in his jaunty step, in the fingers that pulled and peaked the moustachio, and drew forth a somewhat pleasing curl that looked well across a temple. But a more sober mood overcame him before he had got to the top of the stair. The shouts of the besieging party outside had declined and finally died away; the immediate excitement of the adventure, which with Mungo and the unknown lady he was prepared to share, was gone. He began to realise that there was something ludicrous in the incident that had kept him from making her acquaintance half an hour ago, and reflected that she might well have some doubt of his courage and his chivalry. Even more perturbing was the sudden recollection of the amused laughter that had greeted his barefooted approach to Doom through two or three inches of water, and at the open door he hung back dubious.

"Step in; it's your ain room," cried Mungo, struggling with his kettle; "and for the Lord's sake mind your mainners and gie her a guid impression."

It was the very counsel to make a Montaiglon bold.

He entered; a woman was busy at the open window; he started in amazement and chagrin.

CHAPTER XII.—OMENS AND ALARMS.

Beaten back by Annapla's punch-bowl from their escalade, the assailants rallied to a call from their commander, and abandoned, for the time at least, their lawless enterprise. They tossed high their arms, stamped out their torch to blackness, shouted a ribald threat, and were swallowed up by the black mainland. A gentle rain began to fall, and the sea lapsed from a long roll to an oily calm. With no heed for the warnings and protests of Mungo, whose intrepidity was too obviously a mental attitude and incapable of facing unknown dangers, Count Victor lit a lantern and went out again into the night that now held no rumour of the band who had so noisily menaced. There was profound silence on the shore and all along the coast—a silence the more sinister because peopled by his enemies. He went round the castle, his lantern making a beam of yellow light before him, showing the rain falling in silvery threads, gathering in silver beads upon his coat and trickling down the channels of his weapon. A wonderful fondness for that shaft of steel possessed him at the moment: it seemed a comrade faithful, his only familiar in that country of marvels and dreads; it was a comfort to have it hand in hand; he spoke to it once in affectionate accents as if it had been a thing of life. The point of it suggested the dark commander, and Count Victor scrutinised the ground beside the dyke-side where he had made the thrust: to his comfort only a single gout of blood revealed itself, for he had begun to fear something too close on a second homicide, which would make his presence in the country the more notorious. A pool of water still smoking showed where Annapla's punch-bowl had done its work; but for the blood and that, the alarms of the night might have seemed to him a dream. Far off to the south a dog barked; nearer, a mountain torrent brawled husky in its chasm. Perfumes of the wet woodland mingled with the odours of the shore. And the light he carried made Doom Castle more dark, more sinister and mysterious than ever, rising strong and silent from his feet to the impenetrable blackness overhead.

He went into the garden, he stood in the bower. There more than anywhere else the desolation was pitiful — the hips glowing crimson on their stems, the eglantine in withering strands, the rustic woodwork green with damp and the base growths of old and mouldering situations, the seat decayed and broken, but propped at its feet as if for recent use. All seemed to express some poignant anguish for lost summers, happy days, for love and laughter ravished and gone for ever. Above all, the rain and sea saddened the moment—the rain dripping through the

ragged foliage and oozing on the wood, the cavernous sea lapping monstrous on the rock that some day yet must crumble to its hungry maw.

He held high the lantern, and to a woman at her darkened window her bower seemed to glow like a shell lit in the depths of troubled ocean. He swung the light; a footstep, that he did not hear, was checked in wonder. He came out, and instinct told him some one watched him in the dark beyond the radiance of his lantern.

"*Qui est la?*" he cried, forgetting again the foreign country, thinking himself sentinel in homely camps, and when he spoke a footstep sounded in the darkness.

Some one had crossed from the mainland while he ruminated within. He listened, with the lantern high above his head but to the right of him for fear of a pistol-shot.

One footstep.

He advanced slowly to meet it, his fingers tremulous on his sword, and the Baron came out of the darkness, his hands behind his back, his shoulders bent, his visage a mingling of sadness and wonder.

"M. le Baron?" said Count Victor, questioning, but he got no answer. Doom came up to him and peered at him as if he had been a ghost, a tear upon his cheek, something tense and troubled in his countenance, that showed him for the moment incapable of calm utterance.

"You—you—are late," stammered Count Victor, putting the sword behind him and feeling his words grotesque.

"I took—I took you for a wraith — I took you for a vision," said the Baron plaintively. He put his hand upon his guest's arm. "Oh, man!" said he, "if you were Gaelic, if you were Gaelic, if you could understand! I came through the dark from a place of pomp, from a crowded street, from things new and thriving, and above all the castle of his Grace flaring from foundation to finial like a torch, though murder was done this day in the guise of justice: I came through the rain and the wet full of bitterness to my poor black home, and find no light there where once my father and my father's father and all the race of us knew pleasant hours in the wildest weather. Not a light, not a lowe——" he went on, gazing upward to the frowning walls dark glistening in the rain — "and then the bower must out and shine to mind me — to mind me — ah, Montaiglon, my pardons, my regrets! you must be finding me a melancholy host."

"Do not mention it," said Count Victor carelessly, though the conduct of this marvel fairly bewildered him, and his distress seemed poorly accounted for by his explanation. "*Ah, vieux blagueur!*" he thought, "can it be Balhaldie again—a humbug with no heart in his breast but an onion in his handkerchief?" And then he was ashamed of suspicions of which a day or two ago he would have been incapable.

"My dear friends of Monday

did me the honour to call in your absence," he said. "They have not gone more than twenty minutes."

"What! the Macfarlanes," cried Doom, every trace of his softer emotion gone, but more disturbed than ever as he saw the sword for the first time. "Well—well—well?" he inquired eagerly. "Well? well? well?" and he gripped Count Victor by the arm and looked him in the eyes.

"Nothing serious happened," replied Count Victor, "except that your domestics suffered some natural alarms."

Doom seemed wondrously relieved. "They did not force an entrance?" said he.

"They did their best, but failed. I pricked one slightly before I fell back on Mungo's barricades; that and some discomfiture from Mistress Annapla's punch-bowl completed the casualties."

"Well? well? well?" cried Lamond, still waiting something. Count Victor only looked at him in wonder, and led the way to the door where Mungo drew back the bars and met his master with a trembling front. A glance of mute inquiry and intelligence passed between the servant and his master: the Frenchman saw it and came to his own conclusions, but nothing was said till the Baron had made a tour of investigation through the house and come at last to join his guest in the *salle*, where the embers of the fire were raked together on the hearth and fed with new peat. The Count and his host sat down together, and when Mungo had gone to prepare some food for his master, Count Victor narrated the night's adventure. He had an excited listener—one more excited, perhaps, than the narrative of itself might account for.

"And there is much that is beyond my poor comprehension," continued Count Victor, looking at him as steadfastly as good breeding would permit.

"Eh?" said Doom, stretching fingers that trembled to the peat-flame that stained his face like wine.

"Your servant Mungo was quite unnecessarily solicitous for my safety, and took the trouble to put me under lock and key."

Doom fingered the bristles of his chin in a manifest perturbation. "He—he did that, did he?" said he, like one seeking to gain time for further reflection. And when Count Victor waited some more sympathetic comment, "It was — it was very stupid, very stupid of Mungo," said he.

"Stupid!" echoed Count Victor ironically. "Ah! so it was. I should not have said stupid myself, but it is so hard, is it not, for a foreigner to find the *mot propre* in his poor vocabulary? For a *bêtise* much less unpleasant I have scored a lackey's back with a scabbard. Master Mungo had an explanation, however, though I doubted the truth of it."

"And what was that?"

"That you would be angry if he permitted me to get into danger while I was your guest, —an excuse more courteous than convincing."

"He was right," said Doom,

"though I can scarcely defend the manner of executing his trust: I was not to see that he would make a trepanning affair of it. I'm — I'm very much grieved, Count, much grieved, I assure you: I shall have a word or two on the matter the morn's morning with Mungo. A stupid action! a stupid action! but you know the man by this time — an oddity out and out."

"A little too much so, if I may take the liberty, M. le Baron, — a little too much so for a foreigner's peace of mind," said Count Victor softly. "Are you sure, M. le Baron, there are no traitors in Doom?" and he leaned forward with his gaze on the Baron's face.

The Baron started, flushed more crimson than before, and turned an alarmed countenance to his interrogator. "Good God!" he cried, "are you bringing your doubts of the breed of us to my hearthstone?"

"It is absurd, perhaps," said Count Victor, still very softly, and watching his host as closely as he might, "but Mungo——"

"Pshaw! a good lowland heart! For all his clowning, Count, you might trust him with your life."

"The other servant then— the woman?"

Doom looked a trifle uneasy. "Hush!" said he with half a glance behind him to the door. "Not so loud. If she should hear!" he stammered: he stopped, then smiled awkwardly. "Have ye any dread of an Evil Eye?" said he.

"I have no dread of the devil himself, who is something more tangible," replied Count Victor. "You do not suggest that malevolent influence in Mistress Annapla, do you?"

"We are very civil to her in these parts," said Doom, "and I'm not keen to put her powers to the test. I have seen and heard some droll things of her."

"That has been my own experience," said Count Victor. "Are you sure her honesty is on more substantial grounds than her reputation for witchcraft? I demand your pardon for expressing these suspicions, but I have reasons. I cannot imagine that the attack of the Macfarlanes was connived at by your servants, though that was my notion for a little when Mungo locked me up, for they suffered more alarm at the attack than I did, and the reason for the attack seems obvious enough. But are you aware that this woman who commands your confidence is in the practice of signalling to the shore when she wishes to communicate with some one there?"

"I think you must be mistaken," said Doom uneasily.

"I could swear I saw something of the kind," said Count Victor. He described the signal he had seen twice at her window. "Not having met her at the time, I laid it down to some gay gillian's affair with a lover on the mainland, but since I have seen her that idea seem—seems——"

"Just so, I should think it did," said the Baron: but though his words were light

his aspect was disturbed. He paced once or twice up and down the floor, muttered something to himself in Gaelic, and finally went to the door, which he opened. "Mungo, Mungo!" he cried into the darkness, and the servant appeared with the gaudy nightcap of his slumber already on.

"Tell Annapla to come here," said the Baron.

The servant hesitated, his lip trembled upon some objection that he did not, however, express, and he went on his errand.

In a little the woman entered. It was not surprising that when Count Victor, prepared by all that had gone before to meet a bright young creature when he had gone into his chamber where she was repelling the escalade of the enemy, had been astounded to find what he found there, for Mistress Annapla was in truth not the stuff for amorous intrigues. She had doubtless been handsome enough in her day, but that was long distant; now there were but the relics of her good looks, with only her eyes, dark, lambent, piercing, to tell of passions unconsumed. She had eyes only for her master; Count Victor had no existence for her, and he was all the freer to watch how she received the Baron's examination.

"Do you dry your clothes at the windows in Doom?" asked her master quietly, with none of a master's bluntness, asking the question in English from politeness to his guest.

She replied rapidly in Gaelic.

"For luck," said the Baron dubiously when he had listened to a long guttural explanation that was of course unintelligible to the Frenchman. "That's a new freit. To keep away the witches. Now, who gave ye a notion like that?" he went on, maintaining his English.

Another rapid explanation followed, one that seemed to satisfy the Baron, for when it was finished he gave her permission to go.

"It's as I thought," he explained to Count Victor. "The old body has been troubled with moths and birds beating themselves against her window at night when the light was in it: what must she be doing but taking it for some more sinister visitation, and the green kerchief is supposed to keep them away."

"I should have fancied it might have been a permanency in that case," suggested Count Victor, "unless, indeed, your Highland ghosts have a special preference for Mondays and Wednesdays."

"Permanency!" repeated the Baron thoughtfully. "H'm!" The suggestion had obviously struck him as reasonable, but he baulked at any debate on it.

"There was also the matter of the horseman," went on Count Victor blandly, pointing his moustache.

"Horseman?" queried the Baron.

"A horseman *sans doute*. I noticed most of your people here ride with a preposterously short stirrup; this one rode like a gentleman cavalier. He stopped opposite the castle this forenoon and waved his compliments to the responsive maid."

The effect upon the Baron was amazing. He grew livid with some feeling repressed. It was only for a moment; the next he was for changing the conversation, but Count Victor had still his quiver to empty.

"Touching flageolets?" said he, but there his arrow missed.

Doom only laughed.

"For that," said he, "you must trouble Annapla or Mungo. They have a story that the same's to be heard every night of storm, but my bed's at the other side of the house and I never heard it;" and he brought the conversation back to the Macfarlanes, so that Count Victor had to relinquish his inquisition.

"The doings of to-night," said he, "make it clear I must rid you of my presence *tout à l'heure*. I think I shall transfer me to the town to-morrow."

"You can't, man," protested Doom, though, it almost seemed, with some reluctance. "There could be no worse time for venturing there. In the first place, the Macfarlane's affair is causing a stir; then I've had no chance of speaking to Petullo about you. He was to meet me after the court was over, but his wife dragged him up with her to dinner in the castle. Lord! yon's a wife who would be nane the waur o' a leatherin', as they say in the south. Well, she took the goodman to the castle, though a dumb dog he is among gentrice, and the trip must have been little to his taste. I waited and better waited, and I might have been waiting for his homecoming yet, for it's candle-light to the top flat of MacCailen's tower and the harp in the hall. Your going, Count, will have to be put off a day or two longer."

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS UNDER ARMS.

HULLO! Good morning! Merry Christmas!

The same old greeting all the world over. No matter whether it be in a comfortable house at home, in an Indian bungalow, or under an African sky, to the Briton Christmas is Christmas, and must be observed with all due ceremony. It scarcely seems possible that there can be anything new to say or write upon this well-worn theme; but as I sit and recall the memories of bygone days, I almost think that there may be something in them of interest to others as well as to myself. Of late years, at all events, my lines have occasionally fallen in strange places; for since that Christmas Day in 1891, when I first set foot in India, and was busy till near on sunset helping to disembark men, baggage, and regimental stores, not once have I been able to spend the festive season in my native land. But for fear of becoming wearisome I must not go back too far—not beyond the year 1895, when I found myself, on the morning of the 25th December, under canvas at Rawul Pindi. I had been on the march since the beginning of the month with half a battalion of my regiment, the old 93rd, now 2nd battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, *en route* from Mian Mir to Nowshera, and had arrived at Pindi on the 24th.

What a jolly time we had had, and what a lot of good it had done us all!

Perhaps the most pleasant time of a regiment's service in India is spent on the march when changing stations, and I doubt if any part of a soldier's training is a better preparation for the stern reality of war. For the first day or two a few of the weak ones fall out, probably the result of frequent attacks of fever, but after that the battalion will arrive at its camping-ground almost as fresh as when it started. Transport works smoothly, every one is in the best of tempers, and the temptations to wander from the narrow path of duty are few. First the start in the chill of a Punjab cold-weather morning, then the halt for "coffee-shop" soon after half the march has been covered,—we have spotted the site some two miles back by the hawks circling above it,—when officers and men alike sit down with ravenous appetites to a capital breakfast sent on overnight. Meanwhile the transport passes ahead of the regiment without a halt, so that on arrival there shall be no delay in settling down into our new quarters. Breakfast over, we swing steadily into camp at about three and a half miles an hour. Tent-parties are already busy, the pioneers have just finished laying out the ground, the quartermaster is ready to issue rations, and the cooks are ready for them as soon as issued. Officers' servants

have got their masters' tents up, and *bhisties*, or water-carriers, are getting ready the baths. In the afternoon officers will turn out for polo, or snipe-shooting should there be a jhil in the neighbourhood, while Tommy amuses himself with football or cricket. In the evening the sergeant-major may have organised a camp-fire and a sing-song; but, as a rule, we are most of us ready for bed soon after 9 P.M. unless two regiments happen to meet at the same camping-ground: then there will certainly be a regimental match of some sort during the day, and exchanges of hospitality will last long into the night. But to-day is Christmas Day. Needless to say, there is no march: a Europe morning is a not unwelcome change from our recent early hours; breakfast in the mess-tent takes the place of coffee-shop, and so we prepare for the serious duty of enjoying ourselves as much as possible. Unfortunately a wretched grass-cutter, too miserly to clothe himself properly, has died of cold during the night, and his caste-brethren come to beg a small allowance in order that the funeral rites may be decently observed. These consist, for the most part, in giving themselves a feast in which they drown their sorrow — an easy task, especially for those to whom he owed nothing. The remaining servants come to salaam and express their wishes for their master's prosperity, and their confidence in his shortly being promoted to the post of Viceroy, or at least to the position of a "Lord sahib." Incidentally they mention that last year "So-and-so sahib" gave his servants Rs. 10 to keep Christmas, and that thereby his reputation among all natives was enormously increased. Surely you can do no less for your honour's sake. So they, too, go away rejoicing; but the grass-cutters reflect that their brother might just as well have lived another day, then they would have had two feasts instead of one. This time the sahib has killed two birds with one stone. But since, after all, it is only their bad luck, for which no one can justly be blamed, we are all at peace with one another.

The remainder of the day passes much as in any civilised part of the world, with only such variations as may be accounted for by the temperature, and merits no further description from me.

Let me get on to 1896. Where was I then? Ah yes, I remember, crossing the Bay of Bengal in the good ship Suisang. Captain Galsworthy, of Cowshing fame, was our skipper, and right nobly he exerted himself for our entertainment. I was returning with Captain M. S. Wellby from a trip across Tibet and China, which had occupied us the greater part of a year, and now we were going back to India and to our respective regiments with very mixed feelings. Looking forward to seeing our brother officers and many other friends, we could not but regret that the freedom

of the last nine months was at an end. Rough work and hard living had been our lot for many a day, but with it had come the consciousness of success, which far more than made up for all our privations.

For months we had been without news of any kind, and although we had received great bundles of letters and not a few bills on arrival at Pekin, we were still a long way in arrears. The Jameson raid was still a matter for heated discussion. The advance of the Egyptian army, the Dongola campaign, and the commencement of that series of operations which finally resulted in the battle of Omdurman, were barely realised. For the present the fact that we had overstayed our leave for three full months was not allowed to weigh very heavily on our minds—the mere fact of to-day being Christmas Day sufficed to drive such dull cares away. Certainly it was Christmas under difficulties—only one passenger besides ourselves, a lady going to join her husband in Calcutta, and all three of us bad sailors; but Captain Galsworthy was a host in himself. All the delicacies of the season had been reserved for the great occasion. Bird's-nest soup and mangosteens formed the advance- and rear-guards of a meal the main body of which consisted of roast-beef, turkey, and plum-pudding,—a notable meeting of East and West to find on one bill of fare. After dinner the ship's officers entertained us with an impromptu concert, in which Christmas carols alternated with "The Man who broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" and similar ditties, while the skipper and our lady passenger took turns at the piano. Towards midnight we got hold of the Compradore, a fat old Chinaman, whose business, or "pidgin," it is to look after and cater for the native passengers, and tried hard, though in vain, to get him to sing to us. A most appreciative listener, he flatly refused to turn entertainer even for a moment. We did, however, get him to join us in a dance, though sorely against his will.

And so Christmas Day 1896 was numbered with the days that are gone, and we must pass on to 1897.

The scene is changed, and I must ask the reader to accompany me to the shores of the Victoria Nyanza, where I had arrived on December 17, after a seven weeks' journey from the East African coast. At every station along the road I had gathered news of the outbreak of the Sudanese at the Eldoma Ravine, and of their refusal to accompany Lieut.-Colonel Macdonald on an expedition northwards to the unknown country lying between Lake Rudolf and the White Nile. Everywhere the opinion had been that I should find all disturbances at an end, and that Macdonald would be able to make a fresh start almost at once. Very different was Macdonald's own opinion, and that of every one of the small body of Europeans whom I found on my arrival on the top of a hill which overlooks the Govern-

ment station at Luba's, and from which I got my first view of the greatest of the African lakes.

It was on this very hilltop that the first fight of the Uganda mutiny had taken place on the 19th October, and it was in the station below us that poor Major Thurston with his two companions, Wilson and Scott, had been taken prisoner and shot. For two whole months fighting had taken place almost daily, generally of a desultory nature; but on two or three occasions there had been engagements of which a great deal would have been heard had they occurred in a less distant portion of the empire. Only a week before my arrival Pilkington of the Church Mission Society, and Macdonald of the 14th Sikhs, a brother of our commanding officer, had been killed on the same day, and the losses among the loyal natives had been very heavy. At present, at all events, there was no prospect of fighting being finished before the arrival of a strong contingent of Indian troops from the East African Protectorate, and although they were well on the way up country to our help we were ignorant of the fact.

So much I soon learned from conversation with my new comrades, and while talking I could not but wonder if fighting had ever taken place in a more beautiful spot.

Looking down from the top of Luba's Hill I could see into the Government station on the shores of the lake, some 3000 yards from where I stood: the figures of the enemy and of their women were easily distinguishable through a powerful telescope as they moved to and fro. Even as I looked shots were being exchanged between our working parties and some of the Sudanese in the banana plantations which lay between me and the fort. And in an open space, not more than 1200 yards from the enemy's position, was an advanced post held by a small force under Captain Harrison, which I was shortly to join. Beyond, I looked westward to the promontory of Lugumbwa's, and across the Napoleon Gulf to the outlet at Jinja's, where the mighty Nile leaves the lake and rushes headlong over the Ripon Falls. To the north and east lies the highly cultivated province of Usoga, to the south the island of Uvuma, and a vast expanse of water as far as the eye can reach. Serious as the situation already was, it was rendered far more so by disaffection in Buddu, and by the escape of the rebel king Mwanga from his confinement in German territory. To crown all, if crown were needed, was the certainty of fresh disturbances in Unyoro, and the possibility of some other of the Sudanese companies joining those who had already taken up arms against us.

These various complications compelled Macdonald to leave us himself for Buddu, and to take with him about half our available forces, already none too strong for the work in hand.

Such was, roughly speaking, the position on Christmas Day 1897, the first I spent in Africa.

Our party in the lower fort consisted of Captains Harrison and Austen, Ferguson of the R.A.M.C., a trader named Gemmel, and myself, with a garrison of 200 men, only 50 of whom were trained troops. Night-watches and drill-parades, rendered more than usually realistic by shots from the surrounding trees, were varied by occasional attempts to cut off the enemy's food-parties when returning to their fort; for, weakened as we were, we could undertake no serious operations. But on Christmas morning the daily parade was dispensed with, and the hearts of the garrison made glad with an issue of bullock's meat. Good wishes were exchanged by signal with our fort on the hill-top, and though vigilance was unrelaxed, we did our best to forget our surroundings. As usual, the Christmas dinner was to be the important feature of the day, and preparations were intrusted to Ferguson, our worthy mess president. Most manfully he rose to the occasion. I myself, being a fresh arrival from the coast, was well provided with stores, and was able to subscribe some white flour, bacon, and a cheese; Ferguson produced a plum-pudding, sent out from home by parcel post; the others drew upon their very slender resources and gave freely of the best. If memory does not play me false, I think we even opened a precious bottle of whisky that nothing might be wanting, though where it came from I cannot say. For a few hours we lived in a different sphere: our thoughts were not of Africa, and our conversation was of places beyond the seas, many hundreds of miles from where we then sat. Former Christmases were discussed, and the floodgates of reminiscence were opened for a time. But ere long the nimble mosquito recalled us from these happy fields, and the moon sinking in the west reminded us that the happiest days cannot last for ever. Last good nights are said, the officer on watch is left to his solitary vigil, and we disperse to our tents with the knowledge of a return to more serious duties on the morrow.

Again the scene changes. This year, 1898, though still in the Uganda Protectorate, I am alone in a fort in the newly reoccupied Shuli country. Three months ago only the older men in the district had ever seen a white face; now a considerable force had marched through and established itself in these distant provinces, annexed by Sir Samuel Baker to Egypt many years before. Some there are who remember the benefits of law and order established under his strong rule, but there are more who look upon us with suspicion and fear: with the former friendly relations are easily entered into, but time and a more intimate acquaintance with European methods can alone conquer the distrust of the latter. The task of gaining the confidence of the natives is rendered infinitely more difficult by the fact that after the outbreak of Mahdism, when the Sudanese troops who now

form part of the Uganda Rifles were cut off from Egypt, they maintained themselves in these provinces for years by force of arms alone. Gleefully they will relate how they drove one chief into those hills to the west and carried off the whole of his live stock; or how they fought for two days in the hills to the south and held their own against a combined attack of the Shuli and Madi tribes. Now and then one meets with a man with an old wound or shattered limb, who tells you, with a grin, that it is the result of a fight in which he joined against the soldiers who form your escort, but that now he no longer fears them, and is quite prepared to let bygones be bygones. Unfortunately such reconciliations are rare, and cannot altogether be trusted; but time will work on our side, and the *pax Britannica* will some day extend even to this remote corner. It was among such surroundings as these that I spent Christmas-day in 1898. Parades and fatigues were dispensed with, and the day given over to dancing and festivities instead. At 11 A.M. my three native officers called upon me, shaking hands and solemnly repeating "kismis," a word they had taken the precaution of learning from my Swahili boy from Zanzibar. Then as we sat down they told me that in the old days they used to keep the feast of *Id* just as we kept Christmas, but that now they had forgotten when it came round; and so long is it since they left their homes, they had even forgotten the order of the Mohammedan months. Again Ramazani bin Yusuf came to the rescue, and with his aid and that of Whitaker's Almanac we found the required information, and I promised that the *Id* should be observed as religiously as Christmas. I grieve to say that they were not quite so punctilious with regard to the fast month of Ramadan, which should precede the feast. Then the conversation turned on other topics: they spoke of Sir Samuel Baker and Lady Baker — "Sitt" as she was invariably styled; of Gordon and of Emin; of Zobair Pasha and of Fadl-ul-Mula Bey;[1] of the great raid to the east, when they marched for a month, crossed a waterless district, and arrived in a rich country, whence they drove off innumerable sheep, goats, and camels; and of the famous battle with the dervishes at Rejaf, said by the mutineer prisoners to be the best fight they ever had till they fought the white men on Luba's Hill. These and many more things we talked about before we parted.

As the officers filed out the non-commissioned officers came in, saluted, shook hands, and departed into the brilliant sunlight outside.

Later, in the cool of the evening, natives from the nearer villages mingle with the soldiers,

[1] In this raid under Fadl-ul-Mula Bey the Sudanese must have reached the "Turkana" country, and cannot have been far from Lake Rudolf—a wonderful performance. The camels were afterwards eaten at Lado by Emin's orders.

dancing madly to the music of drums and horns. Slender Dinkas, thick-set Mondos, cannibal Makaraka, who have left behind their native vice, long-legged Shuli, and sturdy Madi, can all be seen, together with many other tribes too numerous to mention. Meanwhile, in a corner of the parade-ground, my Swahili boy is giving a feast to the non-commissioned officers of goat's meat, Sudanese bread, and three huge earthenware jars of *marissa* or native beer brewed from dhurra or *metammeh*—a form of millet which is very plentiful in the district. Three dusky beauties, wives of a local swell, grace the board in all their native nakedness: squatting on one heel, the other foot stretched out before them, they form a picture peculiarly typical of African society. No ceremony or etiquette hampers the conviviality of the gathering. Guests arrive, eat their fill, depart to dance, acquire a thirst, and return to quench it, just as the inclination takes them, the ladies smoking and drinking with the best. But even joys like these must have their ending, and as the sun sinks towards the Nile the native visitors begin to disperse to their various villages. The soldiers fall in for roll-call parade, and when my senior native officer reports that night-guards have been posted and that everything in the station is correct, I retire to my house with a feeling that though alone, my Christmas might easily have been spent in some less interesting and enjoyable way.

It is sad to think that the district of which I write is now deserted by the natives, and that food for the garrison has had to be imported from elsewhere. This in the "granary of Africa"! Truly the blessings of civilisation are sometimes most cunningly disguised.

It is not without considerable diffidence that I attempt to complete the task I have set myself. So great and so varied an amount of literature dealing with South Africa has recently made its appearance, the work of far abler pens than mine, that the interest of all readers of 'Maga' must surely be approaching exhaustion. Yet I would appeal to you to bear with me a little longer.

Of war I have nothing to tell; for as I sat and waited for the post-cart to take me from Somerset East, in the eastern province of Cape Colony, to Cookhouse Station, it was hard to realise that it was at our very doors.

Soon the cart appears and we take our seats. My fellow-travellers—a Dutch boy and the lady from Cookhouse refreshment-room on the back seat, three Kaffirs with the driver in front—gave no great promise of an interesting or instructive morning. But the drive was not without incident. The near leader, though uncontrollable, confined his energies to bolting the whole distance of sixteen miles, and showed sufficient common-sense to stop at the numerous gates along the road. But for this

we should have been unable to pick up a would-be passenger whom we overtook some four miles out. I was, I confess, a little puzzled as to where he hoped to sit, but the difficulty was easily disposed of by his taking the place of the lady, while she sat on his knee. They were not strangers as I, in my ignorance, had supposed.

In due course, and in rather less than the ordinary time, we reached our destination, where we found the Uitenhage Rifles — the only approach to war I saw that day.

Some ingenious person had hit upon the idea that Christmas Day being a great English festival, the Cape Dutch were likely to avail themselves of the opportunity to interfere with the railway or to make themselves otherwise unpleasant.

Here at last was a genuine sign of the times which gives a very fair idea of the strange feeling of unrest which pervaded the whole of South Africa at that time.

The most innocent actions on the part of the Dutch were looked upon with gravest distrust, while the mildest precautionary measures on the part of the English were considered by the Dutch to be nothing else than open threats. Hence it came about that on this Christmas Day all leave had been stopped along our lines of communication, and that, at all important posts, vigilance was redoubled. It is probable that this particular danger was purely imaginary, nevertheless there is no doubt that it was gravely apprehended by many people well able to judge. On the other hand, I may as well state that one of the most influential Dutchmen in that neighbourhood had chosen this day to give a dance to all his native employees and their friends. He at least evidently anticipated no trouble. I had still twenty odd miles to cover before night, but as the cart would not start for some hours I visited the Volunteer camp. Here I found an old friend of Aldershot days, who had come out to South Africa like many others on the off-chance of a job. From him and his brother officers I learned a great deal about the state of feeling in the colony, as several of them were colonial born. We talked, too, of what we should do when the war was over. He, with plenty of time at his disposal, hoped to make a shooting trip in the direction of Lake Ngami; I, if all went well, proposed to visit Manicaland in search of game. But the time was long past when people talked airily of the war being over in a few weeks. Such plans as we discussed were sketchy in the extreme, and referred to that happy time which then seemed so distant. For the present the stern work of war was uppermost in the minds of all. The magnitude of England's task seemed perhaps even greater than it really was, for it was but lately that we had realised it; and when the time came for me to continue my journey we parted, knowing that our plans were never very likely to see fulfilment.

I reached Bedford about

sunset, and was able to call on one or two people to whom I had introductions before returning to my hotel for supper. Here again I was struck by the strangely peaceful appearance of the little town nestling beneath the Stockenstroom mountain.

Yet with it all a vague indescribable feeling of unrest seemed to pervade the very atmosphere. No man could trust his neighbour, and I, as a stranger, was shunned by all.

A sufficiently uninteresting day I think I hear you say; and so, indeed, it was. But beneath the surface lay that which interested me more than anything else could then have done.

I had left England for South Africa with, I think I may fairly say, as open a mind as was possible for any man in my position. I had read a considerable amount of literature dealing with South African affairs —books differing as widely as those of Mr Bryce and Mr Fitzpatrick; books embracing every aspect of the South African question. I had heard Mr Chamberlain and his opponents in the House of Commons. I had discussed the question with pretty well every one of my acquaintances whose experience had enabled them to form an independent opinion. Now at last I was able to form some slight opinion of my own, I could see things for myself, dimly it is true, yet with my own eyes. In Somerset and Bedford I had spoken with those who knew.

It had been a relief to get away from camp and garrison to the country. There the military difficulties were all, or nearly all, that concerned us; here the far more difficult political questions assumed their true proportions. In spite of reverses no one doubted but that the vast resources of the British empire, drawn from all quarters of the globe, would triumph in the end. That was right enough, but below was a gnawing doubt. What would the Government do when all was over? Would former costly mistakes be repeated? If so, life in the colony would hardly be good enough.

Then, again, was that other question, Was this war a just one? At home there were those who told us that it had been brought on, in a spirit of avarice, by British diplomacy. The Boers, we know now, had been told the same by their advisers. Here, I think, people were able to form a sounder judgment. War could not possibly have been averted more than two years longer, and in 1901 it would have been far more terrible than in 1899. It can scarcely be doubted that the Transvaal was not quite ready for war: another two years of preparation, internal and external, would have increased England's difficulties incalculably. Some even said that we should then have been compelled to form our bases at Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town, in place of Maritzburg, Sterkstroom, Naauwpoort, and De Aar.

Dr Clark's plan of campaign

was fraught with far less danger to his native land than Mr Labouchere's advice, though probably neither was taken into account by the framers of the ultimatum. Other considerations must have led to that act of madness.

I do not mean to say that all these impressions were conveyed to my mind in that one short Christmas Day of 1899, but it was then they began to form themselves. A better knowledge gained from time to time, especially during a prolonged visit to Kimberley Hospital, tended to modify in some details, but to confirm as a whole, those early ideas. Even now they are not much worth, but such as they are I have written them here.

We have heard so often that "the end of the war is now in sight" that we have become a little sceptical as to the absolute truth of the statement, but the time has now come when the administrator must supersede the soldier.

I am afraid I am not of those sanguine ones who expect a speedy and completely satisfactory settlement of all differences at an early date; yet I do believe that in time South Africa will be as loyal and as prosperous a portion of the British empire as is Canada at the present day. Holding that opinion, I hope that some Christmas Day in the not very distant future may find Central and Southern Africa as peaceful and contented as was Rawul Pindi in 1895.

NEILL MALCOLM.

THE CASKET LETTERS.

THE problems of the Casket Letters have exercised historical ingenuity for centuries. The title "Casket Letters" is derived from the small coffer of silver, apparently a gift from Mary to Bothwell, in which the documents are said to have been found. In Mary's Inventories this coffer is not mentioned. After many years of controversy the discussion about those papers may almost be brought to a point. The philological difficulties are cleared away. It is certain that the papers, whether forged or genuine, were in French, which was not the French published in polemical tracts of the period. We may also leave out of account arguments derived from character, such as the contention that Mary was not the woman to act or to write in the spirit which the letters reveal. Under the stress of passion the superficial character is broken up, and contradictory moods may rapidly succeed each other. Even as to style, it is quite conceivable that Mary (as in the letters) may sometimes have written naturally and simply (letters i., ii., viii.), sometimes in a strain of modish and almost unintelligible euphuism, as in letters iii. or iv. This is at least as probable as that forgers would venture on two such dissimilar styles.

The letters are in congruity with Mary's later behaviour to Bothwell, her protection of him, her generosity towards him, her marriage with him, her refusal to desert him. All these things indicate a passion for Bothwell, and suggest that she was an accomplice in the murder of her detested husband.

The difficulty as to admitting the genuineness of the letters, we shall see, is caused mainly by the ineptitude and inaccuracy of the men who were accusing Mary. Allow fairly for these, and part of the mystery vanishes.

The history of the Casket Letters may be briefly stated. On June 15, 1567, Bothwell fled and Mary surrendered to the hostile lords at Carberry Hill. On June 20 the lords for the first time, according to their own account, became possessed of evidence against Mary, in the form of letters written by her own hand. How did they get these letters? On December 8, 1568, Morton gave Cecil a written account of the procuring of the documents. On June 19, 1567, Morton and Maitland of Lethington were interrupted at dinner in Edinburgh by "a certain man." He was probably either Sir James Balfour or an agent of his. Balfour was then the keeper of Edinburgh Castle. The castle contained certain papers and other property of Bothwell's, which after his flight from Carberry Hill he had no personal opportunity to remove. Now Balfour, if any one, was undeniably a party to the written *band* of the murderers of Darn-

ley. Three years later, on October 15, 1570, Randolph, for long Elizabeth's ambassador in Scotland, told Cecil a singular story. He said that the murderous *band* was kept in the castle, *in a little box*, with a covering of green cloth, and that out of this "little box" the *band* was taken by Maitland of Lethington, in the presence of Sir James Balfour, after Mary's surrender on June 15.[1] It seems unlikely that Bothwell kept *two* "little boxes," elegant enough to need a cloth desk or cover. Thus, if we believe Randolph's circumstantial story, Balfour had been tampering with Bothwell's coffers at the earliest safe opportunity.

This notoriously treacherous rogue, or an agent of his, it may have been, who interrupted Maitland and Morton at dinner. He told them that three of the fugitive Bothwell's retainers had just visited the castle. Morton sent to apprehend them: his emissaries caught two of them — Cockburn and George Dalgliesh, a chamber-man of Bothwell's. On the 20th June, Dalgliesh, being threatened with torture, revealed a silver box, which was brought to Morton at eight o'clock at night. The box was locked. Next day, in presence of Atholl, Mar, Glencairn, Home, Sempil, Sanquhar, the Master of Graham, Tullibardine, and Lethington, Morton broke the box open, as they had no key: the documents therein were then inspected, and restored to Morton. He declares that he added nothing, altered nothing, and subtracted nothing from the contents, which were letters, missives, contracts, sonnets, and various writings.[2] None of the men who witnessed, as Morton declares, the opening of the box, is known to have protested against the truth of his deposition, — a strong card in the hand of believers in the letters.

The lords at this time were sorely in need of proof of Mary's guilt, for they had rigorously prisoned her in Lochleven. Throckmorton, Elizabeth's ambassador, was trying to work for her personal safety. On July 25 he reports that "they mean to charge her with the murder of her husband, whereof they say they have proof by the testimony of her own handwriting."[3] Mary's signature to her abdication, and to Murray's regency, was obtained the day before this letter was written — July 24. The Casket Letters *may* have been used to coerce her. Why, getting the evidence on June 20, did the lords defer using it for more than a month? Throckmorton had his information from Lethington. The lords, whatever their later scruples, had now no hesitation in privately denouncing their queen.

The capture of the casket was instantly rumoured abroad (after June 21, 1567), but the rumours were inconsistent with

[1] Foreign Calendar, Elizabeth, 1569-71. No. 1334.
[2] Henderson, 'The Casket Letters,' pp. 113-116, 1889; Bain, Calendar of Scottish Papers, ii. 730, 731.
[3] Cal. For. Eliz., viii. 298.

the nature of the documents finally produced. Thus on June 25, Drury, from Berwick, reported that "a box" of Mary's contained papers about her intrigues with France; "it is promised Drury to have his part of them." *These* "box" papers are heard of no more.[1] On June 29 Drury reports that these papers as to France "are kept in a box, part in cipher deciphered."[2] On August 2 the Spanish ambassador, de Silva, wrote telling Philip of Spain that he had met Murray, who said that he knew of a long *signed* letter of Mary to Bothwell, in which a plan for poisoning Darnley, or, failing that, the blowing up of Darnley by gunpowder, was mentioned with much detail. This very long letter Mr Froude regarded as Mary's famous "bill" or "Bible," written from Glasgow, number ii. of the Casket Letters. But *that* contains no reference to gunpowder, though it does refer to "a more secret device": it is *unsigned*, and lacks the reported details. So Murray was ill-informed, or de Silva misunderstood him, or the letter was not yet shaped in its extant form.[3]

So I had written, but, while this article was unpublished, new and unexpected light dawned on the letter spoken of by Murray to de Silva. Murray had not seen the letter, and he was speaking six weeks after the casket was discovered. But now we have the evidence of a MS. *dossier* collected by and for Darnley's father, Lennox, as late as the sittings of the Commissioners who examined the question in October-December 1568. Now, in one of these Lennoxian statements, which contains a copy of a letter written to Darnley by Lennox three days before the murder at Kirk-o'-Field, there is a fairly copious *précis* of the letter of Mary to Bothwell, which Murray described to de Silva in July-August 1567. Thus from July 1567 to the eve of the English inquiry (October-December 1568) this extraordinary letter was regarded by Lennox's party as one of the *pièces de conviction*. It most certainly was *not* the long Casket Letter II., and we hear no more of it on any side. What, then, was this incriminating letter, which was never produced? It adds to the darkness, and imports an element of suspicion. The other Lennox papers, hitherto unpublished, are of undeniable authenticity, and will probably soon be edited by the scholar who has kindly permitted me to read the transcripts.

On November 28 Drury (not a very sound authority) told Cecil that "the writing which did comprehend the names and consent of the chiefs for the murdering of the king is turned to ashes; the same that concerns the queen's part kept to be shewn." This was done, he says, at a meeting of the lords, before the sitting of Par-

[1] Cal. For. Eliz., viii. 261. [2] Ibid., 264.
[3] Froude, viii. 203, 204, Note i.

liament in December. If the document thus destroyed was in the little silver box, Morton's declaration that he subtracted none of them was false. But if the document was earlier taken out—that is, before June 20 — by Maitland, as in Randolph's tale, and if the "little box" in its green cloth cover was the casket, then Maitland, who took the band out, may also have put something in.

On December 4 there was a meeting of the Privy Council. In the record of the meeting not a word is said about the letters.[1] But in another document, of the same day, we read of a meeting of Murray, the Lords of Secret Council, *and others*, barons and men of judgment.[2] The others were men of strong Protestant tendencies. Atholl and Mar, of the Privy Council, were absent. The proceedings illustrated the motives and the ineptitude of the prosecution. The meeting declared that a law was necessary for the security of Mary's captors, if it be found "that they have not offended." And that they have *not* offended they prove by the circumstance that "the queen's own default" was the cause of their action. And they demonstrate that "default" by Mary's Casket Letters, which, on their own showing, they knew nothing about when they revolted, and locked her up in Lochleven!

These letters they now described as "written and subscribed with her own hand."[3] The letters (unless the promises of marriage are meant) are not subscribed, and the description is grossly careless. In the Act of Parliament (December 15), the same absurd excuse is made for the action of the nobles, but the letters are now spoken of not as "subscribed," but merely as "written wholly with her own hand."[4] (It is an odd little point that, when Morton, on January 2, 1571, gave a receipt for the casket, it contained "xxi" documents. When the documents were exhibited at Westminster in 1568 they were in number xi.[5]) Why did the queen's friends in Parliament let these proceedings pass? They answered this question in their Convention at Dumbarton on September 12, 1568. They said that a protest would merely have ensured Mary's death, which had often been threatened. The letters, they averred, were not in Mary's hand, and "are devised by themselves in some principal and substantious clauses."[6] Mr Henderson argues that this proves that the letters were *read* in the December Parliament. This hardly follows. Copies or translations of the letters from the original French into Scots may have reached Argyll, Huntly, or others of the queen's friends. We know that translations existed before this Convention in September 1568, for on June 12 Murray

[1] Register of Privy Council, i. 595.
[2] Goodall, Examination, ii. 62-66.
[3] Ibid., 62-65.
[4] Ibid., 67.
[5] Henderson, pp. 21-33.
[6] Goodall, ii. 360, 361.

wrote to Middlemore, saying that Wood, an agent of his in England, has translations with him. Murray wishes the judges to see these, and to say whether, if the originals prove to be in accordance with the translations, they will be accepted as proving the case against Mary.[1] Men of business should have sent to Elizabeth copies of the actual originals, in French. These original letters, with the casket, were carried by the Scottish Commissioners to York, in September 1568. Norfolk was shown the famous Glasgow letter (No. ii.) and was properly horrified.[2] A strange thing is said to have occurred at York. Lethington got hold of the Scots translations, had them copied by his wife, one of the queen's Maries (Mary Fleming), and sent them to Mary.[3] Then, as Mr Froude quotes Sergeant Barham, speaking at the Duke of Norfolk's trial, Mary "laboured to translate them into French again, as near as she could to the originals whence she wrote them; but that was not possible to do, but there was some variance in the phrase, by which, as God would, the subtlety of that practice came to light."[4] This is meaningless. Mary could not have kept a copy of letter ii., because the letter states that she had no paper, and wrote on a piece already scored with memoranda. But, if Lethington sent copies both of the French originals and the Scots translations, then Mary might have tried whether she *could* translate the Scots into the phrases of the French. However, this is only one of the many mystifications of her accusers. Lethington, in any case, seems to have shown the originals to Elizabeth's commissioners at York.[5] Elizabeth removed the informal inquisition to Westminster. Here on December 7 Murray and his allies produced the famous "Glasgow letters."[6] On December 8 they produced seven other writings of Mary, also in French, and in the Italian hand, then coming into use, "which seven writings being copied, were read in French, and a due collation made thereof as near as could be by reading and inspection, and made to accord with the originals."[7] On December 9 some corroborative evidence, from servants of Darnley—Nelson and Crawford—was put in: to this we shall return. On the 14th December a number of English nobles were present, in addition to the Commissioners, when the minutes of the whole investigation were read. Then "sundry letters," and "one long sonnet," and a promise of marriage by Mary to Bothwell, all in French, and all attributed to Mary, were produced, apparently in English translations. For it is added, "of which letters, the originals, supposed to be written with the

[1] Cal. For. Eliz., viii. 485, 486.
[2] Bain's Calendar, ii. 526-529.
[3] The evidence is merely that of a "confession," attributed to Bishop Lesley.
[4] Froude, viii. 390, 455; viii. 519, Note i.
[5] Bain, ii. 526-529.
[6] Calendar, ii. 569, 570.
[7] Ibid., 571.

Queen of Scots' own hand, were then *also* presently produced and perused, and, being read, were duly conferred and compared, for the manner of writing and fashion of orthography, with sundry other letters, long time heretofore written and sent by the said Queen of Scots to the Queen's Majesty." At best, the evidence of handwriting is notoriously treacherous, and we do not hear that experts were consulted. Their opinion, even if present, would be of little weight. The examination, in any case, cannot have been protracted and scientific.

Elizabeth, being truly pure and good, had refused to see Mary in person, and the earls present, "having seen such fowle matters," thought Elizabeth quite justified in her refusal.[1] Mr Froude writes: "At first only four, Cecil, Sadler, Leicester, and Bacon" (not all of them *earls*), "declared themselves convinced. The rest either thought, or said they thought, that there was still room for doubt, or that they must suspend their judgment till the Queen of Scots had been heard, or that they had themselves no right to be judges." Men of honour could say no less. But when Bacon pressed them, they admitted a compromise; Elizabeth must not see the dubious Mary. The official documents say nothing about these creditable hesitations, which Mr Froude appears to have found in a Spanish MS.[2] As Mr Froude justly asks, "What more was to be elicited when the great point had been gained of disgracing the Queen of Scots before the English peers, it was not easy at first sight to perceive." Elizabeth now reduced the reluctant lords, who would not condemn Mary, to admit that Mary was not a person whom she, the very dear friend of Leicester, could receive. Finally Elizabeth gave her open verdict. Nothing, she said, was proved against Murray and his allies; but "there had been nothing sufficiently produced nor shown by them against the queen their sovereign, whereby the Queen of England should conceive or take any evil opinion of the queen her good sister for anything yet seen."[3]

So ended the farce of an English inquiry. Since 1582, when the original letters and the casket were in Gowrie's hands, nothing is known about them. There is very fair reason to suppose, as Lady Baillie Hamilton has shown from a seventeenth-century document, that the casket is now in Hamilton Palace. It was purchased as a relic about the time of the Restoration by a lady, from whose heir it was again bought by a Duchess of Hamilton.[4] The purchase was "from a papist," and if Esme Stewart, Duke of Lennox, got the casket, as he tried to get it, it may well have been in papist hands.[5]

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[1] Calendar, ii. 580-582.
[2] Froude, viii. 463, Note i, 464.
[3] Goodall, ii. 305.
[4] "An Historical Relic," 'Macmillan's Magazine' (1899).
[5] Henderson, p. 42, quoting 'Bowes' Correspondence.'

The letters would have been long unknown if Scots, Latin, and French translations had not been published in 1571-1573 in connection with Buchanan's 'Detection.' The French versions were not copies of the original French, but translations from Scots or Latin translations. *Copies* of the original French versions of letters iii., iv., v., and vi. exist at Hatfield, or among the State MSS. There are also contemporary English translations (often varying in a significant way from the Scots texts) of letters i., ii., iv., and vi.

What, then, is the matter in the letters, and what are the dates and occasions? They begin, undeniably, when Mary was with Darnley at Glasgow. According to an official journal of dates by the prosecution, called "Murray's, or Cecil's, Diary," Mary left Edinburgh on Tuesday, January 21, 1567. The dates in this diary, however, are certainly not always correct. Huntly and Bothwell accompanied her to Lord Livingstone's house of Callender. On Thursday the 23rd, says the Diary, Mary entered Glasgow; on Friday the 24th Bothwell "was found very early ("tymus") inspecting the king's lodging that was in preparation for him, and the same night took journey towards Liddesdale." That he did so is certain: Scrope on January 28 reports to Cecil a raid of Bothwell's on the Elliots on January 27.[1] On Tuesday the 28th Bothwell "came back from Liddesdale *toward* Edinburgh." Probably Bothwell reached Edinburgh on January 29, or late on January 28. Mary was at Glasgow, says the Diary, from January 23 till January 27, when she brought Darnley "to Calender, *towards* Edinburgh." On the 28th she took him to Linlithgow; on the 29th she heard from Hob Ormistoun that Bothwell was returning "towards Edinburgh." On the 29th she stayed at Linlithgow and wrote to Bothwell. On the 30th she moved to Edinburgh, "and Bothwell, keeping tryst, met her upon the way." Darnley was placed in Kirk-o'-Field. The only day when Mary is *here* said to have written to Bothwell is Wednesday, January 29.

The letter marked i. is dated "Glasgow, Saturday" (January 25), "in the morning." Mary complains of having no letters from Bothwell, and of his delaying his return "longer than your promise was." She can, therefore, have known nothing of his ride to Liddesdale. It may, however, be alleged that it is delay of letters, not of his return, that she laments. She says that she will bring Darnley to Craigmillar on Monday, where he will be "all Wednesday," or "on Wednesday." She speaks of Darnley's gaiety, and of the pain in her side. She expects benefit from something (a letter? or medicine?), "if Paris" (a servant of Bothwell, just entered into her own service) "brings me that which I

[1] Cal. For. Eliz., viii. 170.

send him for." "What shall I do if you be not returned when I come there?" Then *did* she know of the Liddesdale journey? The letter is carried by Beaton, who goes to Edinburgh on a legal affair.

The second letter (which ought certainly to be reckoned the first) has long seemed an almost insoluble problem. Apart from the difficulty of some of its contents, to which we return, the date of writing is an enigma which we may solve. Accepting the dates of the Diary, the letter is wholly out of harmony with other entries in that Diary prepared by the prosecution, and with the second confession of Paris, Bothwell's servant. One thing is certain, the letter, or most of it, had a lost French original, which is here and there evidently mistranslated. The original was written on paper which had previously been used for jotting down memoranda. The difficulty of dating the letter has been found enormous. The contents, in brief summary, are as follows:—

First, Mary complains of having left her heart behind her, and admits that she was sulky, "whilk was cause" that nobody spoke to her till dinner-time. Mr Henderson quotes "whilk" from the *English* version. "Whilk" is Scots; Laing reads "which."

Next Mary describes her talk with a gentleman of Lennox's (Crawford) held before she entered Glasgow. Then she describes interviews with Colquhoun of Luss, Sir James Hamilton, and others.

Next she says that Darnley sent for Joachim "yesternight," and what date was that? She describes Darnley's intimate knowledge of her private affairs. She went to supper and returned to Darnley. A conversation on his repentance followed, of which we have also Crawford's version. They spoke of the gossip of Highgate, a man of Archbishop Beaton's. (Mary mentioned this affair in her letter of January 20 to Beaton, and it often occurs in the new Lennox *dossier*.) Mary promised to take Darnley to Craigmillar to be cured. He professed his trust in her. Mary says that his heart is wax; hers of diamond save to Bothwell, and here she seems to refer, as Laing notes, to a poem by Ronsard. She then denounces Darnley and Lady Bothwell as a lachrymose pair. She is writing the day after this interview with Darnley,[1] and says, "*This is my first day's work;* I shall end the same to-morrow." She confesses her hatred of her task, which the English but not the Scots version makes her say, "but I had begun it this morning." She apologises for her bad writing, is going to bed, would like to sleep in his arms.

Yet she goes on—sleepy, but still scribbling — to fill the paper. She describes Darnley's

[1] "The day after," I think, because she says, "I saw him not this evening;" now she had seen him "after supper," so "this evening" seems to be that of the day after the interviews. It is uncertain.

health and evil breath. Then come in a set of memoranda for the letter. Next follows an account of her being embraced by Lord Livingstone, and bantered about her love for Bothwell, an incident which occurred on the day they parted. She describes a bracelet which she is working for Bothwell: she will make a better. "I am now passing to my *faschious* purpose" (*fâcheux*). She abhors it. Darnley will come, if she promises to be at bed and board with him. "But he hath prayed me to tarry till after to-morrow."

(Was this written on Sunday the 26th? "To-morrow" would be Monday, 27th, and they actually left Glasgow on Tuesday 28th January.)

Conversation as to how the lords would take their reconcilement followed. Bothwell is asked if he "can find out any more secret invention by way of medicine," as Darnley will take the bath at Craigmillar. Mary repeats that she hates her task, and would not do it for her own revenge. He suspects her love affair, and his own danger. After more remarks on the bracelet, she praises her constancy, reviles Lady Bothwell, apologises for the memoranda, and sends her love. New memoranda here appear, with the odd one, whether meant for herself or the bearer, "Remember you of the Earl of Bothwell," also "of the lodging in Edinburgh," which sounds as if she *now* knew of the Kirk-o'-Field plan.

This letter would have been entirely damning to Mary if the prosecution could have left it alone. The minute knowledge of detail, the changes of mood from cold ferocity to pity and repentance, "deepening with the deepening of the night"; the abject submission to Love "unconquered in battle," of the proudest heart; the jealousy; the prayer to God to unite two true lovers like Bothwell and herself; the device of the memoranda blended with the epistle,—all these things justify Mr Froude's remark that the letter, if forged, "could have been invented only by a genius equal to that of Shakespeare." No person of any genius was among the possible forgers—except Lethington, who, later, died for his queen.

Damning the letter is, if only the prosecution could have let it alone. But, with their habitual ineptitude, they did not let it alone. It does not fit their scheme of dates, and their external evidence, which ought to corroborate the genuineness of the Casket Letters, damages it in the highest degree. Thus, on December 9, 1568, Thomas Crawford of Jordanhill, a distinguished soldier, was called before the Commissioners at Westminster. He had been, as we saw, in attendance on Darnley during Mary's visit to Glasgow in January 1567. He told the Commissioners that after each interview with Mary Darnley repeated to him exactly what had passed, to be reported to Lennox. He himself "did, immediately at the same time, *write* the same word

by word, as near as he could possibly carry the same away."[1] Crawford had met Mary not far from Glasgow as she came thither, and there held a conversation with her. "And sure he was that the words now reported in his writing, concerning the communication betwixt the Queen of Scots and him, upon the way near Glasgow, are the very same words, in his conscience, that were spoken," while the conversations reported to him by Darnley "are the same in effect and substance, though not perhaps in all parts the very words themselves."

Crawford's "confession in writing" was read after this declaration.

On the face of it this "confession," read before the Commissioners, is the very writing which Crawford made in Glasgow, "immediately at the same time." If not, after the lapse of nearly two years, he could not be so positive as to his own accuracy. He is sure that he reports his own talk with Mary *word for word;* what he learned at second-hand from Darnley is "the same in effect and substance." It is true that in June 1568 Lennox told Crawford to get up evidence as to Mary's doings at Glasgow, as to the date, her company, her conversation with himself. But between January 1567 and June 1568 Crawford must have forgotten minute verbal details, unless he had them in writing. Moreover, on June 11, 1568, he was also asked what women were about her, and whether she sent messages to Edinburgh, and, if so, by whom? In fact, he was asked "by all possible methods to search for more matters against her." Now, as Mr Hosack observes, Crawford's deposition contains no such additional matters — nothing about Mary's women, letters, and messengers. His written paper may thus most probably be the paper written "immediately at the same time."

If so, Crawford's evidence is fatal to the authenticity of the second Glasgow letter. It is fatal, because it has often the closest verbal correspondence with the *Scots* translation of Mary's second Glasgow letter written in *French.* Now it may perhaps be possible that Mary and Crawford might verbally correspond in their accounts of their own conversation in Scots, even though Mary wrote it in French, whence it was translated, while Crawford wrote it in Scots. But it is impossible that a Scots translation of Mary's French report of a conversation with Darnley should verbally correspond with Crawford's Scots version of that conversation as reported by Darnley to him. Thus the identity of expressions in both reports of Mary's talk with Crawford may pass — almost. There exists, happily, the contemporary English translation from the original French, and we may compare the three versions.

[1] Goodall, ii. 246.

Mary's answer to Crawford, as to Lennox's fear to meet her, is given thus:—

Scots Version of the French of Letter II.[1]

"I answeris to him, that thair was na receipt culd serve againis feir; and *that he wald not be affrayit, in cace he wer not culpabile.*"

English Version.[2]

"I told him that he had no receipt against fear, and *that he had no fear if he did not find himself faulty.*"

Crawford's Deposition.[3]

"She annswered that there was no receipt against fear."

[Crawford replied]—

"She answered and said *that he woulde not be afraide in case he were not culpable.*"

Now, Crawford here is, in the italicised lines, verbally consistent with the Scots translation of Mary's French. The English translation does not offer these verbal coincidences.

To take one more example:—

Scots Version of the French of Letter II.

"I am ȝoung.

"ȝe will say, that ȝe have forgevin me oft tymes, and ȝit yat I returne to my faultis. May not ane man of my age, for lacke of counsell, fall twyse or thryse, or inlacke of his promeis, and at last *repent himself, and be chastisit by experience?*"

English Version.

"I am young. You will say that you have also pardoned me in my time, and that I return to my fault. May not a man of my age, for want of counsel, fail twice or thrice, and misse of promise, *and at the last repent, and rebuke himself by his repentance?*"

Crawford's Version.

"I am but younge, and ye will saye ye have forgiven me diverse tymes. Maye not a man of mye age, for lacke of counselle, of which I am verye destitute, falle twise or thrise, *and yet repent and be chastised by experience.*"

In the last clause Crawford verbally corresponds with the Scots version, but *not* with the English translator of the lost original letter in French. *His* last clause is totally different in meaning.

It must be left to students, who will compare all versions, to account for these synoptic singularities. Crawford, reporting a dialogue at second-hand, could not accidentally coincide verbally with a Scots translation of a French version of Mary's letter. So Crawford's deposition is the original of the Scots version; or Crawford wrote his deposition by aid of the Scots translation. The differences, where they occur, must be voluntary, either on Crawford's part or on that of the maker of the Scots version. In the absence of the original French of letter ii. we can draw no absolute inference, except that in one way or another there was collusion. However, if Crawford's written deposition is what he wrote at Glasgow in January 1567, then his writing is the basis of this part of the Glasgow letter ii. If so, the whole letter—nay,

[1] Goodall, ii. 1-29. [2] Hosack, i. 190. [3] Ibid., 580.

all the letters — bear a taint. If Crawford's deposition was written at any later period, then he was shown the Scots version, and copied from it: not a fair action.

With Crawford's was taken Nelson's evidence. He was a servant of Darnley. He declares that it was devised at Glasgow that Darnley was to have lain at Craigmillar, but "he had no will thereof." Therefore he was taken to Kirk-o'-Field. But, in the diary of the prosecution, Bothwell inspected "the king's lodging [Kirk-o'-Field], that was preparing for him," on January 24, the day after Mary arrived at Glasgow. This contradicts Nelson.

We now take the confessions of Paris, Bothwell's man, who went into Mary's service when the pair parted at Callander in January 1567. The first confession did not implicate Mary: it was made, in French, at St Andrews, August 9, 1569. It is not expressly cited by Buchanan in his 'Detection.' Paris begins by saying that, three or four days before Darnley's murder, he was at Kirk-o'-Field. Bothwell, who was unwell, asked Paris to conduct him to an appropriate part of the house. Now, *Bothwell knew the house;* he had carefully inspected it, as Paris and the Diary put in by the prosecution declare. Paris had never been in the house before. In a most inappropriate *coing ou trou entre deux portes*, Bothwell confided to Paris that he meant to blow Darnley up with gunpowder. The rest regards the horror of Paris, his dissuasions, and the details of the murder.

The second confession, in answer to questions (probably enforced by torture or fear of torture), deals with the queen. Having been two days with Mary at Glasgow (say January 23, 24; following the Diary, but we return to this point), he was sent with letters to Bothwell and Lethington (on the 25th?), not with letter i.; Beaton carried that on January 25. He was to find out whether Darnley was to lodge at Craigmillar or Kirk-o'-Field. The letters speak only of Craigmillar: Nelson says that Craigmillar was refused by Darnley. If so, there could be no question of that house. Paris found Bothwell in Holyrood. Next day (say January 26) Paris met Bothwell coming from Kirk-o'-Field, where he and Balfour had been working all night putting things in order. But Bothwell had left Edinburgh for Liddesdale on the night of January 24, according to the Diary. He could not be in Edinburgh on January 25 or on January 26. Laing got over this difficulty by saying that Bothwell did not really go to Liddesdale. He merely went, with Lethington, to see Morton at Whittinghame. The Liddesdale story was meant by the prosecution to account for Bothwell's whereabouts, because Lethington and he were really conspiring, with Morton, at Whittinghame. This will not do. On January 23, Drury,

from Berwick, reported that Lethington and Bothwell had *already* visited Morton at Whittinghame,[1] and we have seen that Bothwell really went to Liddesdale. In the evening of the 26th (?), Paris told Lethington that Mary wished to know whether Darnley was to lie at Craigmillar or Kirk-o'-Field. All this is inconsistent, as we saw, and, chronologically, is absurd. Paris then returned to Glasgow. At *Callander*, *January* 27, a letter from Bothwell arrived. The Diary dates the arrival of this letter at *Linlithgow* on the 28*th*. At bedtime, says Paris, of the 27th, Mary wrote a letter which he gave to Bothwell's messenger; it contained a ring. Now the third letter, containing a ring, is almost unintelligible: to it we return. Next day Paris carried the bracelets and gave them to Bothwell in Edinburgh. He was just riding to meet Mary, and take Darnley to the Kirk-o'-Field. Again the dates are confusing. Paris may have had the Casket Letters read to him: his confession was made nine months after the Westminster Conference. However that may be, his confessions are wholly inconsistent with the *official* list of dates; and as to letter ii., when it was written, how sent, and where, we are as much in the dark as ever.

If we accept the dates of the prosecution for January 24-28, then the second Glasgow letter is a forgery. It could not have been conveyed to Bothwell in Liddesdale, and it cannot be fitted into the plot of the drama. The lords were right as to their date for Bothwell's Liddesdale raid on the Elliots: if they are right in their dates for Mary's Glasgow expedition, then they destroy the authenticity of the incriminating letter ii. But here they may have erred as to dates from sheer stupidity. In the interest of fairplay to the prosecution, an effort may be made to explain. The date of Mary's arrival at Glasgow may be wrongly given by the official Diary as January 23, and her setting forth from Edinburgh may be wrongly given as January 21. The 'Diurnal of Occurrents' and Birrel's Diary date her setting out on January 20. This undesigned coincidence is good proof of the accuracy of the entries. Staying a whole day at Callander, she would reach Glasgow on January 22, the date given by Drury, writing from Berwick. She would write letter ii. on the night of January 23. Paris would take it to Edinburgh by January 24, when the official Diary makes Bothwell inspect Kirk-o'-Field. But Paris makes Bothwell do that on the day *after* his own arrival at Edinburgh, when Bothwell, by the Diary, was in, or far on his way to, Liddesdale.

Let us try again! Make Mary leave Edinburgh on the 20th, sleep at Callander, and arrive in Glasgow on January 21. She would write her long letter (ii.) on the midnight of January 22, would send it by

[1] Cal. For. Eliz., viii. 168.

Paris to Bothwell on January 23, while Paris sees Bothwell on that day, and again sees him on the 24th, after Bothwell has inspected Kirk-o'-Field. Bothwell, on the same night, goes towards Liddesdale. This scheme fits everything into place, and may be the true explanation. If so, the hostile arguments based on Paris's confession and on the Diary vanish, and we justify the prosecution at the expense of its own accuracy. This theory also explains an allusion in the letter usually reckoned the first. Therein Mary says, "*If Paris doth bring back unto me that for which I have sent*, I trust it shall amend me." Now Beaton carried letter i. on Saturday, January 25. Paris then must have been sent earlier—that is, on January 23, according to the system here proposed. Probably he was in Glasgow again by the evening of the 25th. Thus, by correcting the dates of the prosecution, we can establish the possible authenticity of letter ii.

The other letters do not bear on Darnley's murder, but on Mary's griefs and jealousy of Lady Bothwell; on a maid who was marrying and leaving her; perhaps on a quarrel between Darnley and her brother Robert; and, in a queer euphuistic way, on the plan for carrying her off as if against her will. The eighth letter speaks of Bothwell's "*brother-in-law that was*"—impossibly. For Mary was abducted by Bothwell on April 24; Lady Bothwell's divorce case was not opened till April 29, nor decided till May 3. Huntly, till ten days after the abduction, was still Bothwell's brother-in-law. Laing makes no note on this curious phrase: equally strange in Mary or in a careful forger.

From this summary it seems clear that, whatever we may think of Mary's guilt, the Casket Letters and confessions have been mismanaged by the prosecution. This part of the evidence, as originally offered, cannot face cross-examination, and must break down before a jury. True, it was not intended to go before a modern court of law, nevertheless accuracy was needed. There can have been no real difficulty in ascertaining dates, by aid of almanacs and dated letters. If we have guessed rightly at the dates, the Casket Letters may be genuine.

Argument from character, and inconsistencies in character, have been discarded. But, as a matter of literary interest, one point must be noted. Letters i. and ii. and viii. are in style direct, simple, and practical, despite the medley of the second long letter. A natural human being is writing in a natural, if inhuman, way. The other five letters are rhetorical, stiff, euphuistic, and as involved as the speech of Elizabeth about her marriage and succession. The style of these letters is the style of the Casket Sonnets. Here is an example from letter iii., which in the old Scottish translations is letter viii. Laing dates it on Wednesday, April 24, from Linlithgow, to Bothwell at Walton, the day before the collusive abduction. Wednes-

day, in fact, was April 23.[1] The letter is No. iii. in our editions. The idea of the arranger must have been that the epistle was written from Linlithgow on January 28, as Mary was on her way with Darnley to Kirk-o'-Field. This Laing opposes. If written then, the letter makes no sense. There is reference, for instance, in this letter (iii.) to a private marriage or contract of marriage, which is out of place on January 28, but suitable enough on April 23. The only result of all this is to prove the futility of "Murray's Journal." It mixes up two separate letters, of different dates, from Linlithgow. That the letter was really written, or was meant to be supposed to be written, on April 23, is plain. The writer sends the ring "by Paris." Now Paris was *not* the bearer of the letter of January 28, which, according to his confession, contained the ring. He *was* the bearer of the letter of April 23, which avers that it contains a ring. A passage from this letter runs thus (I translate the original French):—

"I have sent you, by Paris, in token of homage, the ornament of the head, the guide of the other members, implying that, in investing you with the spoil of what is principal, the rest cannot but be subject to you. In place of which heart, as I have left it with you, I send you a sepulchre of hard stone, painted [?] black, *semé* with tears and bone. The stone I compare to my heart, which, like it, is carved into the similitude of a safe tomb or receptacle of your commands, and above all of your name and memory therein enclosed, as is my hair in the ring, never to come forth till death permits you to make a trophy of my bones, as the ring is full of it (*en est remplie*), in token that you have made entire conquest of my heart, even to bequeathing you my bones in memory of your victory," and so forth.

Apparently the present was a *mourning* ring, containing —heaven only knows why!— Mary's own hair. No style can conceivably be more unlike the frankness of the Glasgow letters. Laing shows that Mary was partial to symbols and enigmatic mottoes. It is obviously more probable that she did write this and similar exercises in the style of Scott's Sir Percie Shafton, than that any forger invented such lucubrations. But how such letters must have wearied a practical man like Bothwell! Probably he never read them through.

If a conclusion must be offered, in the midst of these difficulties, one's first conclusion is that before a jury one could tear the case of the prosecution to rags. How can they account for the Crawford passage? What has my Lord of Murray to say as to his description, given to de Silva, of a letter never produced? Let Sir William Drury give *his* evidence for the letters in the "box" as to intrigues with France in cipher. Let Lethington and Balfour depone as to the band for Darnley's murder taken by them from the "little box." Will the lords kindly explain how and when Bothwell, in Liddesdale, received letter ii.?

[1] Hay Fleming, Mary Queen of Scots, p. 156.

Nelson must be cross-examined so must Crawford. The jury is asked whether on the night before her abduction her majesty, whose style is as simple as Mary's was the crabbed opinion of her lover. Where is Mary's letter now dated January 27, now dated January 28? Is it the letter that never was produced?

No jury could survive nor could the facts have stood a cross-examination. "They were all in it," Murray knew and "Mrs Wemyss but one of her headmaids"—that is Lady Murray in the morning of the day of the murder called Murray to summon her to succeed as a safe witness. Morton's groom Dalgliesh Dalgleish was one of the murderers—but one of the witnesses at the first opening of the casket.

I regret this letter ending in the fact that the Casket Letters were genuine. I cut it short. No matter is a difficulty caused by that circumstance. Is it the *probability* of forgery by the conspirators among the Reformers, I quote as opinion of Robert Melville, one of themselves, in January 15, 1571, he was examined at Stirling concerning the escape of Lethington and Edinburgh Castle.

Melville deponed that "he thinks that the Earl of Lennox sometimes the Regent's handwrite that was sent to Lethington Erne that night." The extract is from the unpublished report of Melville's deposition in Additional MSS. British Museum, 33, 591. Now it is Melville's opinion. Probably it would be possible of forging a letter by Murray, which of these men was above suspicion.

ANDREW LANG.

HELENA FAUCIT (LADY MARTIN).

BIOGRAPHIES of great artists are as a rule disappointing. They do not tell us what we chiefly wish to know,—how it was they became great artists, what were the sources of their inspiration, when the sense of power first dawned upon them, what were the ideals which it was their ambition to portray. The story of a soul is ever hard to tell — to no one probably harder than to the man of artistic genius himself. The greater his genius the less likely is he to indulge in that self-consciousness, which delights in the analysis of its own impulses and strivings. For such analysis he has neither taste nor leisure, absorbed as he is sure to be in efforts to find expression for his thoughts and fancies in some outward and tangible form. From your true artist, therefore, to whom his art is all in all, his self but the medium for letting his fellow-men see what his inward eye has seen, we are not likely to get his story. And thus it is that we are thrown back upon the works of great artists for suggestions as to their personal character, which inevitably finds its way into their works, and by which these are certain to be modified. Thus, even if we know no more about Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto, Michael Angelo, or Raphael, Händel, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, or Mendelssohn, than we know about Shakespeare, still we could from their works form a pretty clear idea of what manner of men they were, and of the ruling principles of their lives. The technical studies of men of genius, the incidents that gave a bias to their lives, their struggles, their defeats, their successes, are very much like those of other men. They are not without interest, but they do not bring us into intimate communion with the qualities to which they owe their fame.

But while this is true of painters, sculptors, and musical composers, how much more difficult must it be for any writer to put clearly before us what it was that made the greatness of actors of a former time. Their biographies abound; but in most of these we seek in vain for any guide as to how the deep impressions upon their public were produced; how lights before undreamt of were thrown upon the text of the dramatist; how a character, which to the general reader seems hopelessly commonplace, was lifted into something that charmed the imaginations and stirred the hearts of enthusiastic audiences; or how the fire and passion of the actor shook "the listening soul in the suspended blood." We read of these things, and we know they were realities. But we must take them upon trust, and picture to ourselves, as best we can, what was the inward force of character in the artist which formed the

secret of his excellence. That secret unquestionably lay in his individuality. Gifts of person and of voice, no doubt, did much; but without a marked individuality, without the inspiration of a heart and soul of deep feeling, illuminated by a vivid imagination, these would not have produced the marvellous effects of which we read in the histories of the theatres of Europe.

A writer like Sir Theodore Martin, not inexperienced in the difficulties of biographical work, could not fail to approach with hesitation the task of the biography now before us.[1] In one sense, no one was so peculiarly fitted for the task, for he was master of information that was not accessible to any other biographer; but, in another sense, the very intimacy of his relation to the subject of the biography debarred him from the freedom of a purely independent judgment. Of the merits of Helen Faucit, as she was known to the public on the stage, closely as he had studied them, he could not himself speak. This must be done by others, and it could only be done through the medium of what was written of her in the contemporary press, and in such portions of her correspondence as his wife had preserved. Of the woman, as she was in his heart and home,—his "other dearer life in life," as she was known to be,—it was not for him to speak, and so "bare his heart before the crowd." Throughout this volume his suppression of self is remarkable; but nevertheless he has attained his object of placing before the world the picture of a great artist and a noble woman, and subtly indicated the intellectual energy, the purity, refinement, and elevation of spirit, wherein lay the secret of the power by which she swayed the heart, and quickened the imaginations of her audiences.

From her earliest years Helena Faucit's mind was devoted to the study of Shakespeare, and in her own nature there were affinities which peculiarly fitted her for the living embodiment of his finest conceptions of woman's nature, endowed as she obviously was with delicate sensitiveness to every mood of the great dramatist's mind where woman was concerned. In her, as in a mirror, every silent suggestion of his genius was caught and reflected. Her childhood was sad enough, save for happy years at school in Brighton and with a beloved sister. Much solitude was her portion, as it is of those in whom thought and imagination are destined to fine issues, and she pored over the book of Shakespeare's plays when she was alone. The most impressive incident of those years was a meeting at Richmond with Edmund Kean. It was followed by a playful rehearsal in the Richmond theatre of the balcony scene in "Romeo and Juliet," overheard by the

[1] Helena Faucit (Lady Martin). By Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B., K.C.V.O. With Portraits. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1900.

whose growing recognition and admiration were impersonal.

Her diaries and private letters form another important source of material; while letters addressed to her from many quarters, amongst them from such writers as George Eliot and Robert Browning, give delightful variety. A further source is her own beautiful book of Letters on Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters,[1] dedicated to the Queen, and full of autobiographical details. These Letters appeared first in 'Maga,' and their initiative came from Miss Geraldine Jewsbury, who, very seriously ill, appealed to her friend to write, and prevailed. So to Miss Jewsbury we are indebted for this exquisite gallery of portraits, which in some measure perpetuates Helen Faucit's mind upon the impersonations that made her famous.

There is need to revive the memory of such an one as Helen Faucit in an age when bold and unfastidious impressionism draws crowded houses, and even those who appeal to the remnant who will not bow their knee to the baser Baals have to trust for their enjoyment rather to the charm of gorgeous scenery than to refined and convincing art. It was her power of impersonation that occupied the critic's pen, not the superb *mise-en-scène*, which makes the actor's *rôle* almost ancillary rather than primary. She was "Shakespeare's Lady," and will long be remembered as one, "whose life had been devoted to the task of bringing home to the minds and hearts of the people of the three kingdoms, by the living commentary of speech and action, what she conceived was in Shakespeare's mind when he drew his finest female characters."

[1] On Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters. By Helena Faucit, Lady Martin. Wm. Blackwood & Sons.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

CAMP-FOLLOWERS OF FALSEHOOD—THE WAR-CORRESPONDENT—CALUMNIES AGAINST THE BRITISH OFFICER—THE CENSORSHIP—THE PATRONAGE OF GENERALS—THE ONLY REMEDY—MR W. T. STEAD'S RECKLESS CHARGES—LORD ROSEBERY'S 'NAPOLEON'—THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE ENGLISH—NAPOLEON'S TABLE-TALK.

THE war is fast drawing to a close, and the camp-followers of falsehood and slander enjoy their triumph. Our War Office is assailed, as though its chiefs had ruined the empire to fill their own pockets. Our generals are criticised, as though they were actors who had failed to satisfy the audience of a first night. And now that we have won the battle, changing as we won it the ancient art of war, there is one question that may lawfully be asked,—Shall we again gladly suffer the insolent condemnation of the inexpert? Shall we again show the first vulgar urchin that presents himself into the stalls, and let him frame whatever opinion his ignorance forces upon him of a performance which means life or death to thousands? We believe not, and we congratulate ourselves that, after the experience of South Africa, journalists and other busybodies will be excluded from our camps until the end of time.

For the adverse opinion of the Continent we care not a rap. The joy of France and of Russia at a supposed mishap is a tribute not only to our courage but to their cowardice. They rejoiced every time that their journals announced the fall of Ladysmith, because they hoped that the foe they dared not face had been vanquished by another. Again, the slanderous obscenities that have been circulated on the boulevards merely betray a vice of manners, which "the most polite people" in Europe may explain as it chooses. Lord Rosebery, in a moment of Radical enthusiasm, once declared that there must be something wrong with a nation which could arouse so many foreign enmities. The study of history should have taught him that the twin fountains of hate are fear and jealousy.

The reproaches of our enemies, then, are welcome to our ears. If France and Russia are lulled to security by the falsehood of caricatures and politics, so much the better for us. But there is another kind of slander which, while it is subversive of discipline, can easily be avoided, and that is the slander of the war-correspondent. This gentleman (or his employer) seems to believe that war is conducted for his peculiar benefit. Without knowledge or experience, he is prepared to condemn the operations of our wisest generals. There is nothing magnificent about him save his pride

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[1] Helena Faucit (Lady Martin). By Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B., K.C.V.O. With Portraits. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1900.

manager of the theatre, with results reaching throughout her life. Charles Kemble, sympathetic and appreciative, helped her to confidence in her rare powers. Never throughout her life did she acquire that confidence as a permanent gain, for, like all who are truly gifted with genius, she always saw something better to be attained than she did attain. Her audiences might think her work perfect,—she never did. Her art depended on the breath that reached the chords of her heart and imagination. If it were laden with sympathy, the music came rich and full and various, like a miracle of response. Ill-health, which accompanied her from childhood to old age, had no power to cripple her art. Her spirit suffered no ill-health, and could use the fragile frame as a mantle, of which it was scarcely conscious.

Shakespeare was not in vogue when she began to act, and her first parts in public were never so truly in touch with her best mind as her later wonderful impersonations. Belvidera, Mrs Haller, Margaret, Mrs Beverley, Jane Shore, Florinda, forgotten heroines burdened with asthmatic sentimentality, neither human nor superhuman, — they exacted sighs and shrieks; but on them such living, breathing actuality as she could give, and did give them, was thrown away. Julia in "The Hunchback" was the best of them, until Mr Macready made his heroic venture for higher drama. How he fared, Sir Theodore Martin tells us in these pages. After a prelude of plays of the hour, he dared to produce a succession of Shakespeare's dramas. Scarcely admitting it in words, he was conscious, in fact, of Helena Faucit's power, and its essential importance to his venture, and he taxed it to the uttermost. Katherine, Juliet, Portia, Desdemona, Constance of Bretagne, fell to her in quick succession — parts demanding the most various treatment, the most strenuous self-surrender to the inspirations which revealed each to her understanding. Troubled rather than relieved by appearances in "La Vallière," "The Sea Captain," and "Ion," and many other short-lived poetic dramas, in these as well as in her Shakespearean work she conquered her public, and triumphed even over her own youth and delicate frame. For these handicapped her Constance, whose immortal sorrow she made sublime. Charles Kemble asked her to be Beatrice to his Benedick, on his farewell appearance, and his confidence in her resources carried her buoyantly through the untried *rôle*, and revealed her gift of graceful comedy. His generous admiration is told in her own words, quoted from the "Letter on Beatrice," which long years after appeared in 'Maga.'[1]

Browning's "Strafford" was courageously produced by Mac-

[1] February 1885.

ready, in 1837, while the young poet's name was known only to his peers. Miss Faucit acted Lucy Carlisle and gladdened him. For, like his Balaustion, she had,

> "At first summons, oped heart, flung door wide
> At the new knocking,"

and was so skilled already in "Paracelsus," that the working of his virile thought was luminous to her. But such thought is at first only for the few who can rise by kindred insight to its level. And Browning's thought failed upon the stage from the difficulty of getting actors to understand it, and a public, beyond the choice gathering of a single night, to demand it. The poet never forgot her comprehension, and he and Miss Faucit were friends from that day. Many glimpses of him are given us in this book, touched with appreciation, which is the ensign of the noble mind, and the hope of the world by which we live.

Lytton Bulwer was the playwright *par excellence* of the later 'Thirties and the 'Forties, and Macready esteemed him highly enough to sandwich the "Lady of Lyons" with "Cymbeline" and "The Tempest." Pauline, Imogen, Hermione, Cordelia, and Miranda were added to Miss Faucit's repertory, and with drastic energy Macready piled upon her labours the unsympathetic part of Julie in "Richelieu," following it with Rosalind in "As You Like It." The latter was one of her favourite plays, and her exquisite conception of Rosalind was, as some must still remember, a revelation to her audiences in later years. When it was first required of her, she was still enamoured of sorrow and death, too young to love the sprightliness of the masquerading maiden. But time reconciles us to gladness, and time revealed to her the possibilities of what must have been Shakespeare's own favourite creation. Her first audience was pleased, although not her best critic, nor herself, and this discontent was the stimulus to a richer impersonation.

Mr Macready's experiment lasted till 1843, and then came abruptly to an end, and Helen Faucit was flung upon her own resources. Her apprenticeship was over. Exacting as her manager had been,—how exacting in the stress of work demanded from her it is almost painful to see,—his earnestness and exalted aims found response in her own. The school was a hard one; but it perfected the scholar, as much by its demand on her own initiative as by the spur of Macready's acting, the influence of his high demands, the rare reward of his scanty praise. None the less he had a sincere regard for the girl-actress, whose seriousness equalled his own, although it was tempered by a graciousness and selflessness to which his nature was a stranger.

The liberty in which she found herself free to give full play to her own conceptions was grateful to her. Work for seven years had been relaxed so seldom,—only, indeed, at times

of absolute prostration,—that it was in itself a joy to breathe unfettered by incessant toil. Edinburgh and Glasgow were the first scenes of her renewed activity, and in both she could act without the disquietude of an ever-present and ever-critical *exigeant* manager. In Edinburgh lived Mr Theodore Martin, one of a company of young poets who loved pure literature, noble art, and high endeavour. He had seen Miss Faucit in London and had felt her intrinsic distinction, the presence of a quality of mind and heart which elevated voice, gesture, and emotion. Edinburgh, ordinarily critical and cool, warmed quickly up to delighted enthusiasm. Here was no mouthing and gesturing simulacrum, but a lovely, living reality, whether Pauline, Juliet, or Rosalind. "Martin," said a friend, "I did not know I had a soul till I saw Helen Faucit." The young poet sought and was honoured by her acquaintance, which grew to friendship, to love, to marriage. He has not recorded his own claims to Helen Faucit's regard. Nothing is more noticeable about this book than the absence of its author from its pages. Only when he is the immediate cause of what befell his subject do we read of him at all. For this is biography, not journalism, and we hear more of a modern interviewer in his newspaper column purporting to concern another, than we do of Sir Theodore Martin in all this Life of Lady Martin.

But no such reserve need stay our hand. He is now one of 'Maga's' oldest living contributors. He and Aytoun together were the "Bon Gaultier" whose ballads all read with delighted laughter.[1] A large proportion of them was written by Theodore Martin. Already, in those days, he was not only an accomplished classic, but also a master of most European languages. With German, indeed, his intimacy was so great as to put him in possession of the large literature it conveys, and its spell was upon him what time 'Maga' was making known its masterpieces to the world. Goethe, dominant then, held him under something of the dæmonic control which the great German exercised and understood in others. Theodore Martin's translation of 'Faust,' though long of coming, was reckoned best of its generation when it did come. Of later achievements what need to speak? His 'Life of the Prince Consort' is the only one alluded to in this book, and that slightly, to explain Lady Martin's first visit to Osborne; but those who know it will look to find in the present volume a biography of no ordinary excellence.

The House of Blackwood has been acquainted with him for more than half a century, his portrait hangs in "The Old Saloon," and its members can put on record a long roll of

[1] Bon Gaultier's Book of Ballads. With Illustrations by Doyle, Leech, and Crowquill. Wm. Blackwood & Sons.

incidents, each of which bears witness to the loyalty, the sincerity, the kindly humour, the charm of the man who has lived to paint for us so fascinating a portrait. No wonder that he gained Miss Faucit's confidence, and became her correspondent for several years, until the deepening sympathy, the growing bond, made each essential to the other, and this "marriage of true minds" ripened into the sacrament of union for life.

The fame which had gathered round her at Covent Garden, Haymarket, and Drury Lane theatres was confirmed. It spread across the Channel, and was re-echoed from Paris, where she was recognised as an artist of the first rank. Visits to Paris became ovations, and these reacted on her London and provincial audiences. Something spiritual, an exquisite elusiveness, touched her maturer work with its miraculous charm. Not alone her grace of movement, the glory of her voice, the mental subtlety of her surrender to each varied part, impressed her critics; but a finer element than these, the vision that is of the soul, that comes of the saintly life. For such her life was, and in her early and later journals we find constant expression of that master-key to her marvellous influence. Thus, for example, did the young actress prepare for her first appearance at Covent Garden: "I feel much happier than I did, and have more confidence in the assistance and support of the Almighty in my approaching trial, for without this what could my humble efforts achieve! Oh, how sincerely I pray it may be given to me!" And when it was over, she recorded: "I will now bless the Almighty for having supported me through my fearful trial, and try to go calmly to sleep." And three years later, reviewing their anxieties and encouragements, she wrote: "Oh, what a host of thoughts and feelings, full of most deep anxiety and pain, come crowding upon my mind when I look back! But I trust the most powerful are those of true and humble gratitude to that great and all-merciful Power which has so far sustained and supported me in my anxious and difficult task, and at times, too, when deep mortifications, and perhaps merited, but at the same time most bitter, censures, have made my steps falter, and quenched every spark of energy and strength within me. *How then* have I felt, there was but one hand to lift me up, but one Power I could look to for support and succour! God grant to me in His great mercy a continuance of that support and protection, and His guidance and direction in all things!" She knew the ultimate source of all true art, and went thither straight for inspiration and strength. What wonder that her gifts were consecrated to the ennobling of those who saw her use them! Here lay the secret of her charm, and that spiritual grace which won reverence from those who had eyes to see. Froude said "she had the

most beautiful mind he had ever met with." Browning said that few guessed that "the spirit's glory they hailed nightly" was the "sweetest, fairest, gentlest and completest, Shakespeare's Lady's, ever poet longed for." And young men of fashion discovered their souls when she acted. Her secret to-day would not only clear the stage of tedious frivolity, of the dreary caperings and high kickings which one man greets with empty laughter, and another with yawning; it would make the theatres a joy and a refreshment to the many who long for the revival of an intellectual stage. Might it be possible to conceive of actors and actresses who would take their art from the hands of God with such simplicity and such solemnity as did Helen Faucit?

When she married, she was on all hands acknowledged to be the best artist on the stage. Her Antigone, her Iphigenia, her Lady Macbeth, her Juliet, Constance, Rosalind suffered and sinned, loved, jested, and died as true to their prototypes as the needle to the north. Men felt the Greek maidens burdened with woe upon woe, in their unfathomable depths of love, anguish, fortitude, defiance, and submission. Christopher North discarded all readings of Lady Macbeth for hers, "the true Lady Macbeth." Her Hermione forgave with a majesty which only love could bestow. Wherever she appeared she found unstinted appreciation, but here in Scotland she is, and will be, "a name for ever."

It was in 1851 that she married Mr Theodore Martin in St Nicholas Church at Brighton. The most perfect marriages seem only possible to the greatest natures. Swift as the flash of thought, Tennyson and his wife, Robert and Elizabeth Browning, occur to the memory as instances. Perhaps it is an attribute of greatness to choose infallibly, to serve faithfully, to love unswervingly. Such a marriage was this, and in it Helen Faucit found a rest and peace which, after the excessive labour of her early years, she sorely needed. Home became the best place in the world, where the best things awaited her after her flights to and fro. Together, they visited many lands,—Italy again and again,—and after some years they built themselves a summer home in Wales, where the air of mountain and river and the delights of her own garden revived her more than the long days of travel.

A year after their marriage found them at No. 31 Onslow Square, where they had Thackeray and his daughters for neighbours. An illustrious circle indeed was theirs, and its members move in and out of the story as they did in the years of their coming and going. Thackeray was often in the neighbour house, and had his favourite corner in its library, where some exquisite little pictures, full of simple pathos,—French in their origin, and finished with French skill and delicacy,—were hung. Round the dinner-table men sat whose table-talk made dining a de-

light, and who needed to fear no traitor in their midst, avid of "copy"—Thackeray, Helps, Kingsley, Froude, Sir Frederic Burton, and Dean Stanley, and, in later years, Robert Browning, Dante Rossetti, Matthew Arnold, Huxley, John Millais, General Sir Edward Hamley, and Henry Irving. Nor were gifted women without an honoured place there. Lady Augusta Stanley, George Eliot, Anna Swanwick, Mary Anderson, Geraldine Jewsbury, were free of the house, and many others, of whom records are not wanting in this book. Of Browning, indeed, and of George Eliot, there is much reminiscence. And of one, greatest in the land which daily thanks the King of kings for her living presence, there is frequent mention. The Queen knew and appreciated Helen Faucit, and from the day when the royal yacht was sent to fetch her to Osborne—where Mr Martin, from an accident, was invalided for weeks in January 1868—to the day thirty years later when, after years of suffering, Lady Martin's gentle spirit was "ripened to dwell with God,"—the Queen's gracious hospitality was extended to her again and again, at Osborne and Windsor Castle, and by gifts and remembrance she was made to feel that all concerning her interested the Sovereign whom she loved. Only a few hours before she passed away came the Queen's last telegram of inquiry; and on her coffin her Majesty's representative laid a wreath of lovely flowers, inscribed by her Majesty's own hand, "A mark of sincere regret from Victoria R.I."

"Shakespeare's Lady" she was in every sense. Faithful as Hermione, loving as Juliet, noble as Portia, gay as Rosalind, pathetic as Imogen, dutiful as Cordelia, she appealed best to the best, and drew her joy from their sympathy and understanding. And for greater recompense she had love that measured with Shakespeare's love, which

> "alters not with Time's brief hours and weeks,
> But bears it out even to the edge of doom."

Only one feature of the biography tempts to censure, and that is faint, because the obvious reason goes far to protect it. This is the somewhat copious use of press-criticisms. These appear throughout the volume, from the description of her first appearance at Covent Garden down to her withdrawal from the stage. One is tempted to wish that Sir Theodore Martin had distilled the quintessence of these, and had presented them in his own words. But reflection serves as a reminder that in his case this was scarcely possible. It was necessary to elaborate the growing impression made upon the best dramatic critics of Helen Faucit's day, in their own language, often very admirable, in order that the development of her powers might not be exhibited in a panegyric by one whose opinion could not escape from partiality, but be depicted stage after stage by those who witnessed it, and

whose growing recognition and admiration were impersonal.

Her diaries and private letters form another important source of material; while letters addressed to her from many quarters, amongst them from such writers as George Eliot and Robert Browning, give delightful variety. A further source is her own beautiful book of Letters on Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters,[1] dedicated to the Queen, and full of autobiographical details. These Letters appeared first in 'Maga,' and their initiative came from Miss Geraldine Jewsbury, who, very seriously ill, appealed to her friend to write, and prevailed. So to Miss Jewsbury we are indebted for this exquisite gallery of portraits, which in some measure perpetuates Helen Faucit's mind upon the impersonations that made her famous.

There is need to revive the memory of such an one as Helen Faucit in an age when bold and unfastidious impressionism draws crowded houses, and even those who appeal to the remnant who will not bow their knee to the baser Baals have to trust for their enjoyment rather to the charm of gorgeous scenery than to refined and convincing art. It was her power of impersonation that occupied the critic's pen, not the superb *mise-en-scène*, which makes the actor's *rôle* almost ancillary rather than primary. She was "Shakespeare's Lady," and will long be remembered as one, "whose life had been devoted to the task of bringing home to the minds and hearts of the people of the three kingdoms, by the living commentary of speech and action, what she conceived was in Shakespeare's mind when he drew his finest female characters."

[1] On Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters. By Helena Faucit, Lady Martin. Wm. Blackwood & Sons.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

CAMP-FOLLOWERS OF FALSEHOOD—THE WAR-CORRESPONDENT—CALUMNIES AGAINST THE BRITISH OFFICER—THE CENSORSHIP—THE PATRONAGE OF GENERALS—THE ONLY REMEDY—MR W. T. STEAD'S RECKLESS CHARGES—LORD ROSEBERY'S 'NAPOLEON'—THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE ENGLISH—NAPOLEON'S TABLE-TALK.

THE war is fast drawing to a close, and the camp-followers of falsehood and slander enjoy their triumph. Our War Office is assailed, as though its chiefs had ruined the empire to fill their own pockets. Our generals are criticised, as though they were actors who had failed to satisfy the audience of a first night. And now that we have won the battle, changing as we won it the ancient art of war, there is one question that may lawfully be asked,—Shall we again gladly suffer the insolent condemnation of the inexpert? Shall we again show the first vulgar urchin that presents himself into the stalls, and let him frame whatever opinion his ignorance forces upon him of a performance which means life or death to thousands? We believe not, and we congratulate ourselves that, after the experience of South Africa, journalists and other busybodies will be excluded from our camps until the end of time.

For the adverse opinion of the Continent we care not a rap. The joy of France and of Russia at a supposed mishap is a tribute not only to our courage but to their cowardice. They rejoiced every time that their journals announced the fall of Ladysmith, because they hoped that the foe they dared not face had been vanquished by another. Again, the slanderous obscenities that have been circulated on the boulevards merely betray a vice of manners, which "the most polite people" in Europe may explain as it chooses. Lord Rosebery, in a moment of Radical enthusiasm, once declared that there must be something wrong with a nation which could arouse so many foreign enmities. The study of history should have taught him that the twin fountains of hate are fear and jealousy.

The reproaches of our enemies, then, are welcome to our ears. If France and Russia are lulled to security by the falsehood of caricatures and politics, so much the better for us. But there is another kind of slander which, while it is subversive of discipline, can easily be avoided, and that is the slander of the war-correspondent. This gentleman (or his employer) seems to believe that war is conducted for his peculiar benefit. Without knowledge or experience, he is prepared to condemn the operations of our wisest generals. There is nothing magnificent about him save his pride

and the privilege of print. Though he does not share the hardship of the campaign, he has no scruple in blaming the brave men who sacrifice their lives. But, says he, my paper backs me, and I can publish whatever tale I choose. And so, since five hundred years have not convinced the world that the printing-press is the father of lies, the journalist still holds a position of force and trust. He says what he will; he accuses large classes of his fellow-men without shame or hesitancy. Setting no bounds to his presumption, he describes manœuvres of whose import he is ignorant; and knowing no other contest than a football match, he pronounces with an easy nonchalance upon complicated operations. Nor is he content with the psychology of battle which satisfied Stephen Crane when he wrote his 'Red Badge of Courage.' Divination would be useless to him if it were not impossible. He must write, so he says, with his eye on the object; he must rattle his readers with an "impression" which never could have come to him, and the result is "war-correspondence."

A pitiful result, truly, — of hazardous guesses and hasty generalisations. But after their insolence, the worst crime of correspondents is a light-hearted levity, in which their proprietors and editors must share. Some weeks since one of them attempted to meet the common charge of falsehood and exaggeration, and he met it after his own bluff, blustering fashion. "I have endeavoured to do my level best," said he, "to write the truth, not looking for pay or glory, but simply for my wages as a working journalist." Of course he has won no glory, and doubtless his hard work deserved the wage he got. Yet he and his fellows forget that it is disgraceful to assume a responsibility for which they are not fit. This gentleman who did his best would doubtless prove a most efficient reporter in a police-court; but he is merely boasting when he mentions the truth and himself in the same sentence. For truth is hid at the bottom of the well, and it is not every man who ruffles the water that can entice it to the surface. The reporter who could tell the truth about a war, who could understand the object at which his army aims, must be an expert in a difficult science; and he may not criticise what appears to his facile mind a disaster, unless a wide knowledge of military history or a patient experience of warfare provides him with a just and modest standard of comparison. In brief, truth is not a matter of morals nor of will. Humility and learning alone can find it, and even when it be found it cannot be revealed to others save by a writer who seeks a lurid effect as little as he hopes to air a prejudice.

To give many instances of indiscretion would be out of place. One does not break a flea on a wheel. Yet there are one or two gentlemen whom we cannot pass by in silence. A certain writer, Mr

Hales, for example, whom we have already quoted, has for many months done his best to discredit the army to the readers of the 'Daily News.' Though he comes, we believe, from Australia, and has not yet discovered the difference between blank verse and the journalese of Sydney, he has a profound contempt for the British officer. He finds him ungentlemanly, incompetent, and fantastic. He objects to his manner of speech, which of course differs from the dialect to which his own delicate ear is attuned. And having, as he thinks, made these brilliant discoveries, he hastens to share his newly acquired knowledge with the British public. It is idle for Lord Roberts to assure his readers that our officers have brilliantly discharged their duties. Mr Hales knows better, though his experience of warfare and gentlemen is necessarily not so wide as our field-marshal's. But, by Jove! he is a free journalist, who can say what he chooses, and not even the censor has a right to disturb him in the discharge of his duties. So says the journalist; yet he might remember that outside Fleet Street he finds a harsher master than his trade imposes upon him, and that on the battlefield he must obey a sterner discipline. He should cheerfully take his rank below the youngest officer; honour should oblige him to refrain from criticism of his superiors, as the Army Act might oblige him by the pain of death. Yet there is hardly a single correspondent who has not set himself high above the Commander-in-Chief, who has not patronised a general or two, and who has not covered the private soldier (or the Tommy as he is impudently called) with a shallow sentimentality.

Mr Harding Davis's calumnies, printed with circumstance in a respectable magazine, are inspired by the same spirit of insolent patronage. But happily they were long since refuted by Captain Haldane and other gentlemen who passed many weeks in the Model School of Pretoria. None the less it is curious to note the twist which malice and wounded vanity commonly give to the reporter's mind. Mr Davis, hitherto eminent as the inventor of Jaggers, found the British officers imprisoned in Pretoria so ill-mannered that "what little service I had planned to render them was made impossible." To read such stuff we might believe that once a man became a reporter he ceased to be human or humorous, and Richard Harding Davis withholding a service from a British officer of whose conduct he disapproves is a subject worthy to be frescoed in the office of the New York 'Journal.' Yet the man does not know he is absurd. He forgets that in these matters character is the true test of credibility, and that the "sportsmanship" of British officers cannot be assailed by him. But we may congratulate ourselves that our countrymen were saved the

humiliation of a service rendered by Mr Harding Davis.

However, in nothing have the war-correspondents shown their unfitness for duty more clearly than in their censure of the censorship. They at any rate are not troubled by any foolish notions of discipline, the quality which before all others gives nobility to warfare. They, in their pride, would yield obedience to none, and though the condition of their trade is a strict censorship, they are valiant in abuse when they get home. From the intemperate language which some of them have used, we might conclude that war was arranged merely as a spectacle for the reporter's eye, and that any officer who deemed it his duty to check the reporter's "impressions" was a traitor to his country. The correspondents, in short, have mistaken a privilege for a right, and have not understood that the censor who lets a single message through has conferred a benefit for which the gratitude of a lifetime is insufficient. Once upon a time there was a general who, misliking the censorship, let the correspondents send home what messages they pleased at their own risk. "But," said he, "your despatches will be telegraphed back to me, and if any offend me, I shall put him out of camp." Such a policy as this, sternly enforced, would be the best antidote to the correspondents' arrogance.

Our war-correspondents, then, have consistently injured us. If perchance they have sent home early news, they have helped the cause of our enemies. Worse than this, they have done their utmost to shake the faith of our soldiers in their officers, and thus to destroy discipline. Suppose the rank and file, who believe in the sacredness of printers' ink, read an impudent depreciation of the colonel set over them, will they fight with a better spirit? Will victory easily alight upon the shoulders of him who, in a paper amiably sent from home, is told that he is being driven on to certain death? Again, the vanity of the war-correspondents has persuaded them to take the generals under their magnificent protection. Each of them has a favourite, whom with all the glory of a vast circulation he condescends to applaud. Mr Winston Churchill, for instance, will permit none of his colleagues to depreciate Sir Redvers Buller, while the gentleman who does the war for the 'Manchester Guardian' cries "Hands off Lord Methuen!" It would be shameful if it did not raise a smile; but so long as journalists are allowed to ride up and down battlefields, so long shall we find these knights of the ink-pot patronising "mere soldiers" with the proud ignorance of pothouse politicians. Nor is the tale of their sins half told. Having corrected the popular opinion of our generals, having contradicted the despatches of the Commander-in-Chief, and condemned his policy, they show that they are still human by a minute attention to details. Wherefore they fall to glorifying the non-essential. They discover

that the delivery of letters 7000 miles away from home has been irregular, or that a few chocolate-boxes have not reached their destination. Instantly they clamour for reform. "What is the War Office about?" they ask indignantly. "Shall we any longer endure this infamous incapacity? Is it not time that a business man controlled the empire!" And thus they manufacture their tiny sensations; thus they debase the proper dignity and purpose of warfare, and, with their employers' sanction, degrade a campaign to the level of Mr Pinkerton's picnics.

There are many reasons, therefore, why journalists should not be encouraged at the seat of war. Can one single argument be adduced in their support? We have only to look at the mass of hastily vamped-up literature which cumbers the bookshops to know that it has no other than a commercial value. The real historian of the war, if he arise, will hastily brush it aside, and will look for his facts in the full dispatches sent home by Lord Roberts. There were many wars fought before the telegraph-wire made all things common; and though Cæsar and Marlborough were not hampered in their movements by a set of irresponsible journalists, we are not ignorant of their campaigns. The works of the correspondents, then, are not even the raw material of history; and we may ask in wonderment, What is their value? They amuse the stay-at-home citizen, says the apologist, and they bring prosperity to the newspapers. The prosperity of the newspapers is a matter of national indifference, and the stay-at-home citizen may exist very well without the stimulus of impudent falsehood. In brief, the habit of war-correspondence is an evil which knows no mitigation, save the rumour that the expense incurred during the past year has emptied the till of many a journal.

Yet we cannot hold the poor correspondent solely guilty for the harm which he inflicts. His editor and his proprietor must share the responsibility. For they impose upon the first comer a task which cannot be honestly and judicially performed. "Go out and see," they say in effect to an industrious member of their staff, and they forget that the human eye has its limitations. However highly it be trained, it cannot accept more than a certain number of impressions. It begins by looking; it ends by seeing in phrases. In truth, all the tricks of our most renowned correspondents could be taught to a monkey, and so poor a result as has been achieved is dearly bought by the loss of honour and dignity. Nor has any safe remedy been devised. Mr Battersby suggests that for the future the correspondent should be isolated from the telegraph-wire. The suggestion is wise, so far as it goes. But it would be better still to isolate the correspondent not only from the telegraph-wire but from the battlefield itself. Let him stay at home in Fleet Street with amateur

nurses and hospital-spies, and criticise his superiors. His judgments will neither gain truth nor lose venom.

Mr W. T. Stead, for instance, has not visited South Africa; yet his malignity fades not in the air of England. He has recently published a monstrous letter, which purports to be written by a British officer. "How we are waging War" is the title of this precious document, which is a fine mixture of falsehood and bad feeling. The officer does not give his name; "the precautions necessitated by the severity of the censorship prevent" that—at least so says Mr Stead, who will get few to believe him. The officer is obviously not hampered by the censorship, for his pretended letter is printed in London. He withholds his name for one of two reasons—either he is ashamed of himself, or he has no name to give. If, indeed, he be more than what Mr Stead might term an "alleged" officer, if he be a soldier honestly believing the lies he is said to have written, he would long since have broken his sword. But we prefer to think that there ain't no such person as this British officer, and that if he be not W. T. Stead himself, then he is another man of the same name. The style and tactics displayed in the letter are familiar to us. The "officer" is crammed with rhetorical tags, and contradicts himself from line to line. In one paragraph he "excludes isolated acts and crimes," because they are "due to the passions and vices of humanity." In the next he falls back heavily upon isolated cases, "that he may not be accused of dealing with generalities only." Well, we do not propose to argue with this last ghost of Mr Stead's, this poor, silly Julia dressed up by the Good Man in the hired rags of a soldier's uniform. Rather, we would wish for its contradictions the widest circulation. Here, in large type, ornate with headlines, is the bitterest calumny which the enemies of England can devise, and no child could read it without detecting its false facts and fallacious reasoning. Moreover, as we have said already, character is the test of credibility, and even if the "officer's" effusion contained one single consistent charge we would not believe it. Mr Stead's careless handling of the truth is notorious, and were it for a moment possible that a British officer should recklessly bring unsupported and contradictory charges against his comrades, we believe that no considerations of censorship would persuade him to suppress his name. However, Mr Stead has found another ghost, and in all honesty we declare that we prefer Julia.

But Mr Stead's documents have a kind of psychological value. They reveal a character happily rare in the world's experience — a character of arrogant sentimentality. With nothing but a sanguine temper and a flood of tears to back him, Mr Stead is ready and

anxious to rule the world. He would establish himself as an amateur Providence; he would interfere with all men's business, and brook no interference himself. Many years ago he defined government as a glorified eavesdropping. He would have an ear — his own as often as possible—at every keyhole, and by adroitly using the information thus collected, he would compel even his enemies to acquiescence. Wherefore his friends have called him "good," and truly he is "good" with a "goodness" which most men would avoid. For instance, he does not count among his virtues the faculty of sifting truth from falsehood. He thinks it not improper to bring charges which he cannot substantiate, and when, with an active printing-press to aid him, he would calumniate large classes of valiant, self-sacrificing men, he does not shrink from anonymous slander. To give the lie to our generals is, even for a "good" man, a dangerous enterprise, and Mr Stead embarks upon it cheerfully with a quotation from Olive Schreiner! Again, his conclusions rest upon the shifting sand of report, and the following is as good a specimen as another: he denies that the Boers misused the white flag, on the authority of a single man, who himself speaks by hearsay. "Dr Conan Doyle," says Mr Stead, "gives that calumny its death-blow." Is Dr Conan Doyle, then, another Providence near the throne of Stead himself? How else should he give that "calumny" its death-blow? If Dr Doyle's word is absolute in the discussion, we must suppose that, like a bird, he could be in several places at once, that he was present at every battle, that he had a better chance of observing every small engagement than all the officers in command. If Dr Doyle has not these miraculous properties, we prefer to believe our generals, who have witnessed and recorded the misuse of the white flag and other irregularities. But since Mr Stead is so ready to accept in patient humbleness the testimony of Dr Doyle, why should he refuse credence to British officers, who have had at least as good an opportunity of observation as the author of 'The Great Boer War'? The truth is that, for all his "goodness," Mr Stead will only recognise such evidence as suits him, and no evidence suits him unless it is to the discredit of his own country.

Not long since Mr Stead declared that he regretted he was an Englishman. He may be assured that his regret is not so poignant as ours; but the absurd assertion brings us to another point in the Good Man's character. He is of those whose vanity persuades them to hate their own country, who make it a point of honour to assail their compatriots on the lightest pretext or none. Of these political cannibals Fox is the great example, after whom poor Mr Stead limps with what bravery he may. The type is common enough all over Europe, though it is most generally found among subject races. The Jews, for instance,

are often the keenest of Anti-Semites, and M. Drumont's crazy hatred of the chosen people is but an expression of wounded pride. But Mr Stead's motive for hating England is, we fear, even less disinterested than M. Drumont's motive for assailing his brothers. For he attacks his fatherland merely because that fatherland refuses to accept his governance. Once upon a time Mr Stead believed that he was a power in England, but one by one his illusions have been shattered. He knows to-day that no serious Briton will turn a sympathetic ear to his ravings, and he betakes himself cheerfully to Britain's enemies. So he is no more than a curiosity, an interesting specimen of cannibalism, who has rarely satisfied his rapacious maw. Let us, then, put him in a glass case with a pin through his back, label him in the best Latin that entomology affords, and straightway forget all about him and his unhappy appetite.

It is pleasant, indeed, to turn from a mass of irresponsible criticism to the career of a hero who, better than any, understood the censorship of the press, and who never permitted a busybody to question his actions. We can easily imagine how Napoleon would have treated war-correspondents, had such persons come within his ken: we know well how short would have been the shrift of Mr Stead under the Emperor's auspices. For there was a grand simplicity in Napoleon's temper, which made his worst misdeeds heroic; and even in disgrace he did not lose the faculty of terror. Wherefore he has so tightly laid hold of the general imagination, that the slenderest record of his words and deeds is readable and read. At St Helena he was sometimes peevish, because he did not suffer restraint gladly; yet Lord Rosebery's 'Napoleon: The Last Phase' (London: Humphreys) adds to our interest without decreasing our admiration. It may be said at once that the book is temperate and efficient; it is in no respect a great work; it does not rise to eloquence, nor convince its readers by happily found phrases. But it is a good specimen of the bookmaker's art (we hope Lord Rosebery, the sportsman, will not mistake our meaning), and it is packed with entertainment from beginning to end. The author has studied the mass of literature which concerns his subject with laudable energy; he has done his best to sift truth from falsehood (and none knows better than he the atmosphere of deceit in which Napoleon chose to live); and if he be too lenient to the hero, too harsh to the man whose ill-fortune it was to guard him, the leniency may be attributed partly to political bias, partly to a natural love of the grandiose and picturesque.

Now, it is one of the puzzles of politics that Napoleon, the greatest tyrant of modern times, should have been and should remain the idol of the Radical party. The man who hated democracy because he feared the people, who would permit no freedom of thought

or speech within his dominions, who shot a burgomaster and flogged an actor, who wisely suppressed newspapers and hampered the theatre, was in his own time beloved by the Liberals of England, and is to-day stoutly championed by Lord Rosebery. The attitude of our ancient Radicals is quite intelligible. Napoleon was sworn to destroy England; Liverpool and Castlereagh were sworn, with Wellington's aid, to protect the British Isles. And since nothing that Liverpool and Castlereagh could do was right, it was evident to thousands of Englishmen that Boney was an angel of light, whose advent in London might have seemed a national triumph. To-day the reasoning is not so clear, though it is less personal; yet Lord Rosebery, in doing rather more than justice to Napoleon, is a little less than just to the British Government.

In the first place, he confuses the argument. Napoleon was so great, he suggests, that he should have been treated with every kindness. Concerning the grandeur of Napoleon, there is and can be no discussion; but it is the very grandeur of Napoleon which best justifies the severity of Lord Bathurst and Sir Hudson Lowe. Put all hypocrisy on one side, forget for the moment the splendid element of romance, and you cannot wonder that the English Government was resolute to keep their prisoner safely under lock and key. For many years the Tories of England had persisted in a struggle upon which depended the very existence of their fatherland. They had vanquished their enemy at a vast expense of blood and treasure, and there the task should have ended. They did not seek the capture of Napoleon; he came to them uninvited, because he knew that on the Bellerophon lay his only hope of safety. Lord Liverpool sorrowfully accepted the charge. "If the King of France does not feel himself strong enough to treat him as a rebel," wrote Liverpool to Castlereagh, "we are ready to take upon ourselves the custody of his person." We undertook the custody of his person, and ever since we have been assailed by the very men whose fathers would have incontinently put him to death.

There is, therefore, an obvious hypocrisy in the common view of our conduct and responsibility. We were acting, let it be remembered, not merely for ourselves — we were the watch-dogs of Europe; and most men shared the belief of Napoleon himself, that he would return in triumph from St Helena, as he had returned from Elba. In Europe many friends were left him, besides our own Jacobins. He could once more have gained the control of vast wealth, and the superiority of his temperament was conspicuous as ever. What, then, could England have done? She could not shoot him — that would have been the choice of France. She could not lock him up in a jail — that might have been the policy of Russia or Austria. She did the best that was

possible under the circumstances—she sent him to St Helena, with as much liberty as ever a prisoner enjoyed, with a carriage and six horses, and with an income of £12,000 a-year. For her pains she has endured eighty years of obloquy.

Not that we would give an unqualified approval of our countrymen's conduct. Rather we would suggest an apology, which has been too often withheld. The Tory Ministry of 1815 was rather dogged than intelligent, and they made their first mistake when they appointed Sir Hudson Lowe as governor of St Helena; for Sir Hudson Lowe, admirable soldier and honest man as he was, was neither tactful nor diplomatic, and he was asked to pit his tact against the tact of the greatest diplomatist in the world. On the other hand, we do not share the universal contempt of Sir Hudson Lowe, which none can feel who has attentively studied Mr Seaton's valiant defence. But it is clear that Lowe was not the man for the place. He was at once too firm and too yielding. He strained at gnats and he swallowed camels. He conscientiously strove both to please Napoleon and to win the approval of Lord Bathurst. He tolerated the intriguers who made up the Imperial Court; and it is small wonder that, irritable himself, he increased the irritation of the others. For he faced no ordinary task, no ordinary antagonist. No sooner did Napoleon land in St Helena than he devised *la politique de Longwood*—a plan cunningly designed to wear down the strongest forbearance. He would neither accept favours nor endure slights. He stood upon his dignity, and resented policy. Whatever method of conciliation Sir Hudson might have adopted was foredoomed to failure, because Napoleon, with his eye upon Europe, was determined to win sympathy beyond the limits of St Helena, because he was, in effect, playing to the gallery. Of course he acted well within his right, and none can say that he did not play the game according to the rules. Lowe was his jailer, and it was his business to make him feel the discomfort of the position. On the other hand, Lowe also did no more than he should. He, too, was playing a game far more difficult than Napoleon's, since he faced an adversary of genius, and essayed a game that he was predestined to lose. To either side, therefore, we should at this distance of time yield our measure of sympathy. And we believe that Napoleon, at any rate, was too good a sportsman not to justify Sir Hudson's conduct. When the Emperor died the game was played out, and the Emperor had won nearly every trick. Nor was he the man to whine, save in public, at his adversary's method of play; and his last act was to urge his friends to make peace with the governor.

A confusion of argument, then, has prevented Lord Rosebery from doing justice to his countrymen,—has revived in his mind something of the old Jacobin heresy. But, if we except this blindness of hero-

worship, we shall find in Lord Rosebery's book much that is interesting and valuable. Above all, he characterises the strange, paltry world of Longwood with much lucidity. Gourgaud, Las Cases, Bertrand — he sums them all up, and we agree with him that the ingenious Boswell, that was Gourgaud, is both trustworthy and entertaining. And after all, when discussion is at an end, and when we are tired of assailing or defending Sir Hudson Lowe, there remains in the literature of St Helena a vast mass of admirable talk. Some may prefer the Napoleon of the suppressed letters, the Emperor whose pen was as a cutting sword, the hero who would have flung the cardinals into cold baths, and who rated all the kings of his own making as an angry master rates his schoolboys. In truth, no man ever wielded the pen of sovereignty with a finer decision. But, highly as we admire these finished exercises in dominant vituperation, we are not sure that we do not prefer the Napoleon of St Helena. The style is no longer the style of action. A quiet spirit of familiar reminiscence silences the voice of command. The reflection of the gossip replaces the authority of the monarch. In the pages of Gourgaud and others, faithfully reproduced by Lord Rosebery, we seem to look upon Napoleon seated at his hearth with his dressing-gown around him. Even his readers are admitted to an intimacy which the Emperor in his might admitted to no man, and, as we should expect, the Emperor says nothing that detracts from our respect. The intelligence is as vivid as ever, only it is exercised upon fresh topics. The pride is as lofty as of old, but it is a pride in matters more trivial than a throne. "I made Ossian the fashion," he boasts with perfect truth. "The income-tax is a good tax," he says on another occasion, "for every one grumbles at it, which shows that every one pays it." Rare among men by his triumph, Napoleon is also rare among men by an appreciation of his own career. He is one of the few who have been conscious of their own drama. Taking up a year-book of his reign one day, "It was a fine empire," he said; "I ruled eighty-three millions of human beings—more than half the population of Europe." And again he murmurs, "After all, what a romance my life has been!" It had, indeed; but most, even of the mighty, have taken their life for granted. At St Helena, however, he thought of the future as much as of the past. Now and again he discusses his generals, or declares in an admirable epigram that "Talleyrand is sure to die in his bed." But theology had a constant interest for him, and he never tired of reading the Bible to his companions. Moses he found an "able man," and once he proposed to write his campaigns. In matters of controversy he was by no means orthodox. He objected to Christianity, he said, because it is not sufficiently ancient; and then inconsequently declared him-

self a Mohammedan. Another day he is a stern materialist. "Say what you like," he argues, with a foretaste of Darwinism, "everything is matter, more or less organised. When out hunting I had the deer cut open, and saw that their interior was the same as that of a man. A man is only a more perfect being than a dog or a tree, and living better. The plant is the first link in a chain of which man is the last. I know that this is all contrary to religion, but it is my opinion that we are all matter." It is contrary to religion; but we should not expect orthodoxy from the man who kidnapped a pope, and who made the Church an instrument of policy. Yet he is not always dogmatic: and another day he confesses that "there is so much that one does not know, that one cannot explain." Scepticism, indeed, is his constant attitude, and no discussion with Gourgaud or Bertrand can shift him from it.

His judgment of the English is generally favourable. He holds us good soldiers and bad diplomatists. Above all, he praises our loyalty. "Had I been in 1815," he says with [illegible] the choice of the English as I was of the French, I should have left the battle of Waterloo with [illegible] revolt by unspeakable meanness. But the strangest trait of all is the frankness wherewith he discusses his family and his wives. He thinks ill of his brothers, and he doesn't think he ever loved anybody, which is probably true. On the other hand, he hated much, and most of all he hated the people, as well he might, having witnessed the Revolution. That early impression was ineffaceable, and though for the moment he adopted the cant of the time, the democracy was always loathsome to him. Maybe nothing less than the Revolution could have opened the doors of France to his genius; but it was his genius which alone could have crushed the fury of the mob. For himself, he regretted his solitary, quiet death. It spoiled the scenic effect of his life, and no man was ever more careful of scenic effect than he. "To die at Borodino," he said, "would have been to die like Alexander: to be killed at Waterloo would have been a good death: perhaps Dresden would have been better: but no better at Waterloo. The love of the people, their regret." He died almost alone, surrounded by a few of the mediocrities, whom, as Stendhal says, he always loved. But it was as *l'Empereur* that his body entered the Invalides, and it is as *l'Empereur* that he will live with the life of the world.

THE PASSING OF A NATION.

A GROUP of British officers, of which the writer formed one, was lately listening to the remarks of an educated, if slightly offensive, Boer official upon the war. In the course of them he made the following statement: "This war has caused to arise a mutual respect between my people and yours, hitherto unknown to either." The remark was received in silence whilst the speaker was yet present, and contemptuously pooh-poohed when he had gone. "Respect, indeed! My people and yours," the Boers and the British Empire in one breath, the elephant and the earwig which annoyed him! The remark was preposterous. Deep down in the hearts of those militaires lurked the conviction that it was *true!*

To the mere unthinking soldier there has been something infinitely pathetic in this struggle. I say to the mere soldier, for of course the great Public, *affairé* and astute as it is, up to every move on the board, and well behind all the scenes its unique national safety does not require it to be actually in, is perfectly aware that it has been a war of just vengeance upon a bullying, treacherous, and cowardly conglomeration of bigots, dead to all that vivifies the world, hating all that other men love, quenching all that other men call light. In which respect, as in others, the campaign has been unique. It is the soldiers who have been tolerant, while the great civilian world at home shouted at them to slay and spare not. Hardly a general but has been charged with "criminal lenience" to the captives, or the men he should have made the captives, of his bow and spear; hardly a victory which has not been discounted in the public press because the bayonets were not pushed home over their very spring-catches in blood. And all very right and proper. War is not a picnic, and it must be ended as soon as possible with little consideration for the vanquished. Proclamations, as will be shown later, *have* been diluted with too much of the milk of human kindness; flying commandos *have* been allowed to gallop away in affright unmolested. We have *not* done "what the Russians would have done"; but the question is, Is it inveterate folly to say that we have done as much as we ought, and enough to make a future loyal and loving son of the child we have had to chastise? Let me say at once that I have no intention of answering it, *ne sutor*, &c., to say nothing of a much more obstructive tag, *non-possumus;* but it may not be uninteresting to travel as far as the half-way house to the answer, a little understanding of the Boer himself, as apart from what is nearly his negative pole, his leader.

It is curious that a nation so

rich in historical experience as our own should have made the callow mistake of damning a whole community because of its having gone astray like sheep after false and thieving shepherds; yet this is exactly what the English nation has done. It is not a usual error of ours either. Many a time and oft have we thrashed an enemy with one hand whilst with the other we wiped away a tear for the faults we secretly half admired. To take recent instances: how loudly sang the leading articles of the nobility of the hillmen of the Indian frontier, those handsome Afridis and Orakzais, gentlemen of the mountains, with stuff in them as sterling as that which composed the men whose corpses they mutilated! They meant no harm, bless them, by breaking their solemn oaths up there amongst the peaks: it was all that unmentionable mad Mullah, or perhaps the Amir, unsolved political *x*, or perhaps again the huge, glum Russian bear, for ever hibernating in the background. The Dervishes, too, no language could describe the romantic grandeur of that inchoate mass of bandits. Was it because they were obliging enough to rush upon the Lee-Metfords in what may be called the "hundred-acre formation," or because there were ugly whispers of red breeches and *képis*—the uniform of the misleaders of innocence — having been seen in their camps? But the poor Boers have had to do without anything of this sort, and wondrous well they have managed. Nothing romantic about them, with their dingy clothes, their rough tats, and their squab, unshaven features. Nothing heroic either: have they not kept pusillanimously under cover when heaven has afforded them unlimited glorious chances of coming out into the open? Nothing noble or sentimental; these things are not for men named Swart or Potgieter or Coetzee! Led by villains, they have outvillained their leaders. Think of the "white flag incidents," numberless, unspeakable for treachery and cruelty. Think of, think of—everything! The case against these cursed Dutchmen is overwhelming: it is needless to multiply indictments; they are abominable, impossible, they have been a terrible hindrance to our troops; they must go under! Poor Boers! Yes, you must go under, you are an anachronism, a stumbling-block, a "black patch" upon the map of Progress; but before you disappear, hear a soldier confess that this is all that is amiss with you. You are *not* vile, cowardly, or even more treacherous than a similarly compounded *olla podrida* of undisciplined Europeans would be. You are not impossible. Nay, you are very possible indeed, and will, under cleaner rule, emerge from the pit into which you have fallen, to plant your ungainly, useful feet upon sunlit ground again. We have beaten you, but pride in the victory should be sufficient consolation. Men do not throw up their hats and cheer when they have stepped upon

a beetle, but only when they have overcome something formidable. Vile or not, we have beaten you, and we cheer. Reflect and be comforted!

If the average Englishman were asked to give his idea of the Boer nation, he would probably reply enigmatically, "They are *not* a simple, pastoral people." What fun has been poked at this claim of theirs, bitter fun too for the most part, bristling with the contempt which all men, Pecksniff included, always feel for Pecksniffianism. Yet it is difficult for one who has seen anything of the Boer at home to describe him otherwise than as simple and pastoral. The latter he is of course: it is unnecessary to waste time in proving the obvious. He is a farmer of farmers; his whole horizon, mental as well as geographical, is bounded by his two or three hundred acres of veldt and mealies. Except on occasions of direct necessity or solemnity, such as infrequent shopping expeditions, or those curious foregatherings of the unsociable called Nachtmaalen, he never leaves his ring-fence. He is the most unclubbable man on earth. Not only does he shun the sight of his neighbour, but he will not if he can help it even gaze upon his neighbour's house. Many a Dutch farm is most studiously located, so that it and the nearest homestead may be mutually invisible. He thinks and dreams (chiefly dreams, for he is an astounding sleeper) of his little domain and its population of beasts, children, and Kaffirs (I name them in order of merit). He dies upon it and is buried upon it, as his father was before him, and as his loose-limbed lout of a son will be after him.

Now as to his simplicity. Let me here point out that the converse of simplicity is not, as the vast majority of my countrymen seem to believe, cunning. Nay, more, as students of national character are well aware, so far from being antitheses these two qualities go more often than not hand in hand. The savage is simple, he is also invariably cunning; so it is with the Boer. He is cunning to a degree,—no greater adept at petty overreaching ever lived. No tie of relationship or affection is so close that the loved one is safe from his extraordinary meanness and his passion for getting something for nothing. And yet there is no man easier deceived by the appearance of honesty, obviously a providential disposition of the nettle and dock-leaf order in a land of swindlers. If every Dutchman robs and lies to his neighbour, the victims rob and lie to their spoilers with equal success when their turn comes. On small issues matters thus equalise themselves in a very satisfactory manner. It is on the big issues that trouble comes, when colossal rogues with quite abnormal honesty writ large upon their features, and the inferential integrity of bottomless money-bags behind them,—when such folks as these come frankly in at the farmyard gate and offer tremendous somethings for comparative nothings, it is then that our

Boer, whilst assuming his cunningest aspect, shows the utter simplicity, nay, to coin a word, simpleton-ness of his character. Try and "do" him over an ox, and you will fail. But his allegiance and faith, and eventually his very country, are yours if you play your cards right. The British nation are great discoverers, but they let the Hollanders make this discovery first; and they have been fighting to make up the leeway ever since, adding to the severity of the struggle by their persistence in regarding the Boer as a deep plotter, whereas his very simplicity has been the most immovable obstacle from start to finish. They have done it at last. They need never fear a recrudescence of trouble in South Africa. But it would be far otherwise were the Boers really what we have so long considered them, crafty and artful intriguers. They would then lie low, and bide their time, as beaten plotters have done before, as many believe that the vast Indian population is doing now, as the Chinese have certainly been doing since our last domiciliary visit.

This petty cunning of the Boer, the dominating trait in his character, is particularly noteworthy in that to it must be attributed by far the greater part of his unexpected success in the field. In higher tactics he has confessedly failed. Beaten armies have retired before him unpursued and at their leisure; important strategical points have been needlessly abandoned, unimportant ones wastefully garrisoned; obvious flank movements have been misconstrued into feints, and frontal attacks allowed to roll back without the annihilation they merited. In fact, the greatest condemnation one can pass upon the Boer strategy is, that it has been as faulty throughout the war as that of the British at the outset. But there are few soldiers who will not freely admit that in individual action, in what may be called man-to-man tactics, the Boers have been exasperatingly superior to our own people. How seldom our patrols and scouts have been able to catch theirs napping may be judged by the vast amount of triumph lavished upon solitary instances. The "personal encounter" history of this campaign would be a volume of absorbing interest. The writer has heard, of course, numberless true accounts of such episodes, often from men who emerged from them wounded, too often from eye-witnesses who saw the Briton fire his last shot, not half as often as one would like from the vanquisher in the tourney. The net result is what I have stated, that in small cunning the Boer is unequalled, and consequently holds in small affairs a great advantage over braver, but less guileful, opponents.

But it must not be inferred that the Boers are cowards. No more contemptible injustice was ever done to beaten enemies than that which by far too great a portion of our usually impartial press has been done to these Dutchmen. Instances of bravery, nay, of heroism, have been so numerous

and so sustained, that it would be an insult to the doers of the deeds to catalogue them in any way as *lusus naturæ* in dispositions naturally craven; and of collective heroism, withal, astonishing in a soldiery brought up in a school of pure individualism. Witness the staunch stand in the trenches at Pieter's Hill, under a rain of huge projectiles the like of which no soldier has ever seen before, or the dash upon Broadwood's guns at Tigerpoort, or the forlorn-hope against Wagon Hill, when, if the British army had not been blessed with souls as bold, it had surely lost a division from its list, and a town from its safe keeping. The British army can ill brook such enemies being labelled "cowards." The Boers are brave men: in the name of fair play, let no one state otherwise, and let all, if possible, refrain from criticism too scathing because their tactics are not ours, because they have a rooted objection to the open, to being surrounded, or to fighting at the bottom of a hill when the top is available to them. We can assure the reader that their antipathy to these things is shared to the full by our own troops, though certainly there have been incidents which might give colour to the supposition that such circumstances were actually preferable to them!

The many white flag incidents it is of course impossible to defend, even if defence were our object. The writer holds no brief for the Boers; he has had, and still has, *pendente lite*, that healthy animosity towards them without which a campaign would be a terrible ordeal to a conscientious man. The incidents have been detestable and inexcusable. No amount of savage warfare (some one must write a history of the combats, literally *à outrance*, between Boers and blacks) can palliate them; no amount of battle-smoke can hide the red stain of pure unadulterated murder of white men by white men. I have often spoken of this matter to Dutchmen, and the only excuses worth mentioning have been, firstly, the savage warfare plea; and, secondly, that the offenders were no Dutchmen at all, but foreigners, Frenchmen or Irish. This, as a matter of fact, has been proved a lie; but it is needless to expatiate upon the matter. Treachery brings its own punishment, not the least of which is the profound sympathy felt by British for the few honourable Boer fighting men, whose honour has been irretrievably besmirched by the deeds of their comrades. It may be taken as an axiom that, next to defeating the enemy, an army's greatest desire is to win his admiration and respect. The "white flag incidents" have wellnigh banished both on our part. The writer can state from his personal knowledge that the loss has not been unnoticed and unregretted by at least a few, and the best, Dutchmen.

It is, of course, impossible to speak with any certainty at this stage; but it would really seem as if the "conquest idea,"

so universally attributed to the Boers at the commencement of hostilities, was but another journalistic myth. I have had ample opportunity lately of unobtrusively elucidating many little points in the Boer argument, hitherto obscure or wrongly illuminated, to the great enlightenment of myself, at least. Not by questioning, of course — that is a fatal method of attempting to extract the truth from a Transvaaler, possibly the most frank and accomplished liar of all the motley sons of Sapphira—but by the noting of chance remarks, listening to tales of woe, boring in the extreme except in so far as they might contain evidence of disappointed aspirations or greed. With the best or worst will in the world, no shred of the Pretoria to Durban theory could be fitted in, not a suspicion of contemplated fleshpots in the Garden Colony, never a hint of the sea-coast, at least in the case of the hundred or so typical burghers to whom it has been my duty to be guide, confidant, and friend during the past ten weeks. It seems a pity to destroy picturesque ideals; but I am almost compelled to believe that a vast percentage of the Boers went out on commando against the English for the unromantic but apparently sufficient reason "that they were told to"! A non-existent ambition has been manufactured for them: if there is an itch from which the mass of the Boer nation suffers less than any other, it must be the *cacoethes regendi*. The very notion of conquest, what it implies, and the advantages accruing from it, must be necessarily absent from minds stunted by generations of the pettiest of agricultural calculations, and inhabiting bodies which have existed upon the same mealie-fields since they became bodies. The explanation is an ignoble one; but it is possibly as true as many others of its level would be found to be, if people would but consent to pull the Boer down from the pedestal of accomplished avarice and intrigue built up for him by twenty years of dislike and complete misconception. He is not a heroic scoundrel, but an oafish, solid, slow, and obedient underling, who does "what he is told," and would not understand his Adelphi reputation if it were explained to him.

Too much capital, again, has been made out of his well-known hatred of the British nation. It exists, of course, and is very bitter and deep-seated; it is, in fact, the third portion of his creed, the other two being his God, a force acting directly upon his atomic fate and interests, and his farm, which, God-ridden, colours his whole life from birth to death. It may appear blasphemous to refer to the Almighty as a "force," or to any human belonging as being "ridden" by Him; but this is literally the Boer conception of the Supreme Being. His vote would be "solid" on many of the controversial questions which vex the souls of churchmen at home,—the Actual Presence, for instance, or the efficacy of prayer—Burgher prayer, that is—for is he not

taught to consider himself as one of God's only chosen? Evil times are to him punishments for sin, joyous ones rewards for virtue: he is a bigot of bigots, and would be a fanatic if his religious convictions had ever been set on fire by attrition with disbelief. And his hatred of us and all our ways is as immovable and as uninstructed. But it is difficult, in the light of recent gleanings impossible, to believe that it is strong enough to have drawn him into a tremendous conflict, and more wonderful still to have kept him in it. After all, there is nothing definite in his hatred—it is but a nebulous creed-feeling. I have puzzled many a Boer by entreating him to state his case against us. Whilst he was victorious his martyrising himself in uncomfortable laagers, and on the windy summits of mountains (the Boer hates a hill), was intelligible enough. But when the tide turned, and according to his own most ingrained faith his God was no longer on his side, a hatred ten times as great could never have kept him in the field. No man in the world has a surer instinct as to when a thing ceases to be "good enough." Something stronger must be looked for, and it is to be found, I think, in the reiterated reason given by the Dutchmen themselves, "because they were told to," because a thing more powerful than religion, or home ties, or hatred, had got its grip upon them—*public opinion*—none the less resistless because it was the creation of one great, but evil and short-sighted man, in his turn under the influence of many little but far-seeing men, at the very time he imagined his influence over them to be most paramount. A dull majority is a sure prey to a smart minority, a truism of government to which the Boers are no exception. This has been pointed out before so often, that the excuse for repeating it must be, that it has as constantly been urged as an additional crime of the Dutch, instead of as a palliation of what, after all, has been no crime, only a colossal blunder.

Aiding and abetting this resistless public opinion, there has existed a discipline amongst the Boer nation of which the world, the Boers themselves, never dreamt. The quick wits in the political Hoofdlaager have handled it with consummate skill: perhaps they even created it. Events like the Jameson raid strengthened and confirmed it. I do not here speak of military discipline in the field, though that has been sufficiently marvellous and unexpected; but of what may be called domestic and political discipline, amenability as a whole to orders from headquarters, malleability under one pair of strong hands, acquiescence in uncomfortable schemes stated to be for the public good,—qualities only to be expected, as a rule, in commonweals of very ancient foundation, whose units have learnt to trust their leaders and each other. The Boers have trusted neither. In spite of his heroics and his heavy polls, Paul

Kruger has always been a suspected man; and as for his neighbour, the Boer distrusts him by nature. The nation was too young for mutual faith; the President's rule was too old not to have been discredited, yet the nation pulled as one team to the President's driving. A unique spectacle, for which I maintain we may thank the virile, scoundrelly scene-shifters at Pretoria.

Now that the rugged old coachman has driven them to their political doom, another curious circumstance may be remarked which will no doubt be made much of by future historians. In the past the law of life has seemed to have been much the same for communities as for individuals — both have their birth in pain and trouble, their early difficulties, their strong youth and stronger manhood, their gradual decline and ultimate fall. No nation has ever leapt at once into maturity or been dashed to extinction without many premonitory totterings. Yet here we have a nation cut off from its purely national life in the very flower of its youth—nay, before it has, so to speak, forgotten its teeth-cutting. Kruger's *régime* has been the Boers' first step upon the world's ladder; it has been their last. Henceforth, however high they may climb, it will not be the Vierkleur that bears the strange device *Excelsior*. Surely there must be some explanation known to students of progress for this early death of a strong young man. The corruption of his mentors does not explain it. Other nations have worried their way to centuries of prosperity under more unscrupulous leadership, nations, too, with far less natural backbone than that which stiffens these sons of Holland. All nations, in fact, have started with "might is right" as their motto, until the squeamishness born of civilisation and security has led them to apply to the Herald's College of the world for a reversal of the brazen legend. Have these Dutchmen been peculiarly unfortunate? It would seem so, since fate has led them to collide with the only race the world has ever seen which gains in vigour with increasing age. The British nation is giving the lie to all history and all rules. Its "life"—from the insurance-office point of view —is a marvel. Tabulatorily speaking, it is a monstrosity, and perhaps wonder is therefore wasted when it rises in what should be decrepit senility, and imperturbably absorbs a youthful nation rejoicing in its strength! But this is but the speculation of an ignoramus. Some hand skilled in the analysis of "movements" and great happenings generally should set to work on a problem so enthralling that even an ignoramus can be vastly interested in its solution.

Of the military discipline of the Boers it would be unnecessary to speak had it not been so consistently impugned from the beginning of the war up to its present stage. As I write (the early days of September) the Boer main body is being hustled back into its last corner

taught to consider himself as one of God's only chosen? Evil times are to him punishments for sin, joyous ones rewards for virtue: he is a bigot of bigots, and would be a fanatic if his religious convictions had ever been set on fire by attrition with disbelief. And his hatred of us and all our ways is as immovable and as uninstructed. But it is difficult, in the light of recent gleanings impossible, to believe that it is strong enough to have drawn him into a tremendous conflict, and more wonderful still to have kept him in it. After all, there is nothing definite in his hatred—it is but a nebulous creed-feeling. I have puzzled many a Boer by entreating him to state his case against us. Whilst he was victorious his martyrising himself in uncomfortable laagers, and on the windy summits of mountains (the Boer hates a hill), was intelligible enough. But when the tide turned, and according to his own most ingrained faith his God was no longer on his side, a hatred ten times as great could never have kept him in the field. No man in the world has a surer instinct as to when a thing ceases to be "good enough." Something stronger must be looked for, and it is to be found, I think, in the reiterated reason given by the Dutchmen themselves, "because they were told to," because a thing more powerful than religion, or home ties, or hatred, had got its grip upon them—*public opinion*—none the less resistless because it was the creation of one great, but evil and short-sighted man, in his turn under the influence of many little but far-seeing men, at the very time he imagined his influence over them to be most paramount. A dull majority is a sure prey to a smart minority, a truism of government to which the Boers are no exception. This has been pointed out before so often, that the excuse for repeating it must be, that it has as constantly been urged as an additional crime of the Dutch, instead of as a palliation of what, after all, has been no crime, only a colossal blunder.

Aiding and abetting this resistless public opinion, there has existed a discipline amongst the Boer nation of which the world, the Boers themselves, never dreamt. The quick wits in the political Hoofdlaager have handled it with consummate skill: perhaps they even created it. Events like the Jameson raid strengthened and confirmed it. I do not here speak of military discipline in the field, though that has been sufficiently marvellous and unexpected; but of what may be called domestic and political discipline, amenability as a whole to orders from headquarters, malleability under one pair of strong hands, acquiescence in uncomfortable schemes stated to be for the public good,—qualities only to be expected, as a rule, in commonweals of very ancient foundation, whose units have learnt to trust their leaders and each other. The Boers have trusted neither. In spite of his heroics and his heavy polls, Paul

the plough means that most awful of catastrophes, a cropless spring. Yet the plough remains idle, and the *frau* shades her eyes in vain as she looks for the form of her absent "man" across the great yellow rolls of the veldt. Something infinitely pathetic, is there not, in all this, though we know well enough that the absentee is away fighting for the most nefarious tyranny that ever cursed a land? Let us allow him his excuse: it has been accepted from far worse men. To his blinded eyes that nefarious tyranny spelt liberty. Poor Burgher! Will nothing but extermination alter the reading? It looks very much like it, but your blood will *not* be upon your own head.

It was Lord Beaconsfield who said, in answer to a lady gushing over the noble traits brought out from men by war, that for one fine quality ten evil ones were produced. It is very doubtful if he was right; but if for the word "evil" he had substituted "curious" or "illogical," the apophthegm would have been indisputable. Two incidents occur to the writer which may be of interest as sidelights on the Boer character. A party of mounted infantrymen, carelessly approaching a farm over which the white flag of surrender was flying, were surprised by a volley from its walls, and galloped away, leaving one of their number dead upon the ground. When they had disappeared, one of the treacherous shooters came out from the farm-building and added to his atrocious villainy by robbing the still warm corpse of £15. Some time afterwards, when that little party had almost forgotten the occurrence, as men do in this land of swift forgettings, a Boer bearing a white flag entered their camp, and on behalf of a comrade, who desired to be nameless, handed in to the murdered man's commanding officer the sum of £15!

The second incident is similar, and almost more inexplicable. The scene is of the same description, too—a white-flagged farm, with a party of mounted men approaching it. This time, however, the black attendant circumstances are blacker, for those horsemen are proceeding to the farm by express invitation of a number of Dutchmen within, who have formally intimated their desire to surrender, and have asked to be escorted into camp, as they fear to come alone. A volley, as before, and several empty saddles; one white sergeant and several black scouts killed on the spot, and a trooper with a smashed thigh upon the ground. Out come the assassins and carry the wounded man into the house, where there is a field-cornet. That trooper afterwards described the attentions he received as womanly, and shortly afterwards left for his own camp in an ambulance-waggon, with a "tip" from the field-cornet in his pocket![1]

[1] These are facts,—the victim in the first instance being a soldier of Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, and in the second a trooper of Lord Strathcona's incomparable Horse.

Possibly every campaign ever fought may supply curios of human nature equally puzzling to the analyst; but the above would be difficult to beat. Alas! they are straws which, we fear, do *not* show which way the prevailing wind of the Boer character blows; for they might indicate a sense of honour, or at least a film of conscience over a bottomless well of remorselessness. Neither honour nor conscience has much place in the moral composition of the Transvaaler. Men who know him well would repudiate a charge of cynicism, because they attributed the first *amende* to a fear on the part of the repentant thief of being recognised and brought to book; and the second as a desperate attempt to soothe the angry Britons into sparing the farm from whose windows their comrade was murdered. They might not be far wrong in the present instances, at any rate. The "first murderer" is at this moment a fugitive on the face of the veldt, afraid to fight on, more afraid to surrender, a piteous son of Cain; and an organised conspiracy is lying its best and hardest to obtain release and compensation for the owner of the second farm, which a night or two later blazed as a burning ghat over the poor sergeant's dead body.

The Boers have almost uniformly treated their prisoners well, for which they have obtained more credit than the act deserves. Strange as it may seem, there is a universal disposition amongst fighting men to be civil and attentive to their captives, which may explain in some measure why a general, the soul of British honour, suffered the foul hand of an assassin to lie in friendship in his own for a moment. How Tommy squirmed and swore, ay, and his officers too, when they heard of the entertainment offered to that wretch of Potchefstroom — ham and champagne, and a guard of honour, and a bear-leading general officer to see the creature safely and comfortably down to the sea — what time they themselves were crouching, half-starved and desperately weary, in the bullet-pocked *sangars* of Pieter's Hill! One wonders what the Boers thought of it all. They are peculiarly insusceptible of kindness, having that much of savagery in them which leads them to misconstrue it into weakness. How obvious their astonishment has been at the treatment meted out to them when they have fallen into our hands! It is to be feared that the "pass" system, by which a surrendering Burgher is permitted to return to his farm, with privileges as if he had never lifted rifle against us at all, has undone a great deal of the good our victories have done for us. The "simpleton's argument" must be carried to its logical conclusion if it is to be effectual. The reinstatement of farmers should have been invested with more ceremony, and after a longer interval between the time of surrender and of return to the farm. It has been almost amusing to see the stream of Burghers trotting in to some

of the camps, handing over the Mausers, gabbling over the oath (which most of them do not understand at all, so high-falutin is its phraseology, and would not feel bound to observe it if they did), then "loping" cheerfully off back to the farm, where the goodwife is probably waiting tea for them as if they had only been absent since breakfast-time? Confidence begets confidence. Next day back they all trot again to the self-same camp, with tales of lost cattle, broken fences, departed niggers, and references to compensation for the same, simply alarming in their colossal impudence. These men are not beaten as they should be, and may give trouble again—are sure to if a chance offers, as the sudden appearance of commandos, composed almost to a certainty of oath-breakers, on the lines of communication has proved. Whereas a more judicious line of treatment would have imbued them with a proper sense of their position, and of the really unprecedented generosity of their conquerors. It would cost money, of course, to pack them all down to guarded laagers at a base town, there to reflect in the "earwig-and-elephant" strain for a month or so; but it would be money well laid out. The "pass" Boers are not beaten, they were only bribed and bored into surrendering, and will be found to be individually worth six of their "Ceyloned" friends if any future trouble ever empties the farmhouses again, which God forfend! The stiffest position from which we must oust these Dutchmen is the strongly held one that they are the hub of the universe. By the "pass" system we have, if anything, rather reinforced them in it. *Haud ignota loquor;* fifty "passes" clamour daily round the writer, humbly 'tis true, but with an insistence and a breadth of claim which shows that the humility is rather an expedient than the conviction it should be. "The British Government does not make war upon individuals," says the proclamation. Well, the British Government makes a big mistake when its quarrel is with a nation of individuals. The proclamation is now (September 5) finally revoked, after a previous revocation and return to it of questionable policy; but the damage done is only less than it might have been. The Boer despises kid gloves as much as he does any other article of luxury, and it does not decrease his contempt because he benefits by their smoothness.

But he would be a pessimist indeed who prophesied another general outbreak in this new province of the British Empire: the point we would enforce is merely that all that could have been done to expedite a settlement has not been done, and that it is unnecessary, if not actually dangerous, to leave at large in the country a proportion of the conquered not fully impressed with the significance of the conquest. The fruits of the mistake are perhaps only temporary, but they are unmistakable: they are being plucked at the very moment

these words are being written.[1] Trains are being derailed, patrols cut up, border towns threatened, and columns of all arms being fitted out to deal with those pin-pricks in districts from which our troops ought long ago to have been set free to strengthen the striking power of forces at grips with the enemy farther north. But if this campaign has done anything, it has given us Britons breadth of ideas, the power to see results amid a tangled skein of details. These things, the aftermath of a too hurried campaign, are but details: the end is plain, and a magnificent end it will be. It is no idle dream now to think of these vast colonies as playgrounds for our surplus energies, and lungs for our choking labour-market. The vampire of corruption which has so long sucked the blood of every young enterprise is as dead as mutton. The Boers themselves, though enterprise troubled them little in their mealie-fields, will eventually rejoice in the sunlight hidden from them by the brooding wings of the beast. Public honesty has always got the better of private dishonesty in the end. Politically, the Boer is at present the most dishonest specimen of all the race of electors: it would be strange if it were not so, seeing that he has been called upon to fit out Governments deliberately rotten in every part. It has so infected him in all his dealings that it is doubtful if the present generation will ever be able to grasp the cleanness of British administration. They are sure to see a "jump"[2] in everything, even in concessions, and will be grateful for nothing. I think that we must make up our minds to their suspicion and dislike to the end of the chapter. But the present generation will go—there are those who say that the world will not see many more generations purely Boer,—and can it be denied that in the course of their eventful chapter they have provided for future readers a tale of real if misapplied virility, of resistance to imagined enslavement not unheroic and not without its pathos?

LINESMAN.

[1] The Wakkerstroom district formally submitted on June 16, 1900, and was taken over by General Hildyard. September 1 saw General Hildyard at the head of a column reoccupying Wakkerstroom in the face of a large and active commando of locals. Much the same kind of thing has occurred in the Standerton district—in fact the small columns mobilised to deal with disturbances in districts supposed to have been made as peaceful as Yorkshire have been too numerous to be even catalogued in a footnote.

[2] South African euphemism for a robbery.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

THE Cabinet changes announced after the general election caused more than the usual flutter among the dovecots, perhaps because they were more than usually numerous, perhaps also because they presented unusual difficulties — a condition of things peculiarly congenial for professional cavillers. The Press, native and foreign alike, has exercised without reserve its prerogative of comment on the new appointments: and when we consider their point of view, the comments of Continental journals are no whit less instructive than those of our home-bred critics. Remembering the characteristics of those British statesmen whom, during the past twenty years or so, our neighbours have delighted to honour, we may the better appreciate at its proper value their approval or disapproval of the selections for the present Cabinet.

It is natural that the attention of foreign critics should be centred chiefly on that department of our Government which most nearly touches their interests—the Foreign Office. No Foreign Minister has ever been more popular abroad than the present Premier. His great intellect, his unrivalled experience, his moderation, his seignorial dignity, and his reticence have won him the respect of foreign ambassadors, and placed Lord Salisbury in the front rank of international diplomacy. He now resigns his portfolio at the Foreign Office to Lord Lansdowne, as to whose fitness for the Foreign Secretaryship we should be in sore straits to decide were we to follow the guidance of the newspapers. Their contradictory verdicts, however, cancel each other, and leave us free to form our opinion on the broad facts. One who has held without discredit the two most important viceroyalties under the Crown is not an untried man, while every circumstance of his birth and breeding conduce to the making of an ideal Minister for Foreign Affairs. Beyond that we need not at present go, and for our own part we would rather judge the new Secretary when the time comes for him to put off his harness than now when he is only putting it on.

It is charged against Lord Lansdowne that, though he has been for five years head of the War Office, he has failed to remodel that venerable institution. Perhaps even a greater than he is wanted for such a task. But if he carries with him to his new post any lingering regrets for opportunities lost in Pall Mall, he may console himself with the reflection that Downing Street will renew them for him—for there he need never languish for want of material for the pruning-knife or of the call for sweet drainage. Nor is the latter department less important to the country than the

War Office itself. They, in fact, play into each other's hands, come to each other's rescue, cover each other's failures, and are in every way mutually complementary. Weakness at the Foreign Office leads up to the situation in which the resources of the War Office are called into action, while weakness at the War Office casts an intolerable and unfair burden on the resources of diplomacy. Possibly, it would not be a bad thing occasionally to make such an interchange of offices as that now effected. War Office experience must have opened the eyes of the Minister even if it has closed his lips. Five years at the Foreign Office will, it is to be hoped, both open the eyes and nerve the hands of the new Secretary. The nation will watch with kindly expectation for the practical result.

From time to time the public receives a shock from some inexplicable fiasco in its foreign diplomacy, some apparent failure to hold its own in a fair field. No satisfactory explanation of these lapses is ever forthcoming. In cases where the subject-matter has been much canvassed, and a clear issue formulated, the cession of our rights may be assumed to represent the deliberate choice between two evils. Where this theory is untenable magnanimity may be conveniently appealed to as the covering motive, our country being too great to haggle over trifles. And where the bargain concluded is indefensible on any ground whatsoever, we are offered the consolation that by its means we have at least escaped war. No price being too great to pay for the blessing of peace, criticism is hushed before the profound wisdom of a Government which knows when to subordinate the minor to the major interests of the country. But to square with this hypothesis it is necessary that the two elements in the transaction—the end and the means—be made artificially to change places in the public view. Peace is held out as the one object which was sought for, and, lo! it has been attained. In this way a humiliating defeat is accepted by the country as a real victory, the merits of which, however, none but the initiated can be expected to understand. The intrinsic truth of the whole matter has been concealed throughout,—neither the issues at stake, nor the consequences involved, nor even the process of the controversy, have been revealed to the public. The panorama goes on revolving, fresh scenes engage attention, mistakes are condoned, even the memory of calamities is submerged in the tide of current business.

No other executive department is carried on under such conditions of mystery as that of our foreign affairs; none are so impenetrable to the light of day. Misadventures in diplomacy do not confront public opinion as do shipwrecks, railway collisions, or military disasters. No bones are broken, and there are no coroners'

inquests; the consequences are not tangible or immediate, but remote, only to be apprehended by an intellectual effort. Hence the ease with which facts can be covered up or explained away. The occasions are rare indeed when the naked truth is unveiled, and at the best the process is incomplete. On such exceptional occasions the man in the street may be forced to the conclusion that some one has blundered. His faith in his leaders may be for the moment shaken, but after a few days of cheap satire, purveyed for him by his newspapers, apathy resumes its habitual sway, and all traces of the incident become obliterated. For there has been no court of inquiry, nor action for damages. There is no tribunal for the trial of the delinquents, who are in fact a law to themselves, enjoying the privilege of reporting on their own proceedings, of taking their own evidence, and of passing judgment. They reward or withhold reward from each other according to their fidelity to the unwritten law of the corporation, no other species of merit counting for anything.

By their very constitution our diplomatic departments escape those conditions of friction, competition, and accountability which are essential to all efficiency, and they are protected in the special vices which tend to degeneration. The Foreign Office to-day is more than inefficient, it is almost worse than useless, for, having a name to live, it is dead. From such extreme demoralisation the Colonial Office has been partially saved by its enforced contact with living men from distant parts of the world. The Home Office is more or less under the direct surveillance of the home public. Exempt from these wholesome checks the Foreign Office is in the clouds, answerable to no British constituency, out of the reach of effective criticism. If Mr Chamberlain failed in his efforts to reform the Colonial Office, Hercules himself might recoil from the task of reconstructing the Foreign Office. No Minister will touch it. Each succeeding chief takes it as he finds it, and leaves it a little worse, for deterioration is progressive. In a retrospect of forty years the stages in its decadence may be easily traced. Though far from perfect, the department was in earlier days at least equal to its work. Secretaries and under-secretaries devoted themselves primarily to the interests of the country. They made it their business to study their duty, to collect facts and weigh events. Being better informed than any member of Parliament, they were able to lay down the law to their inquisitors. Ministers had, moreover, a line of policy which could be intelligibly explained. To measure the descent that has taken place, we have but to recall the Hammonds and Layards of thirty years ago, and contrast them with the Curries and Sandersons, Curzons, Wyndhams, and Brodricks of more recent times. The very function of the Foreign Office officials seems to have changed. In those days Ministers and

under-secretaries based themselves on the merits of the transactions in which they took part, whereas in these days of ours they are wholly occupied in parrying questions by plausible or oracular answers. To this humble *rôle* our most cultured intellects have descended. Their criterion of success is no longer the defence of the interests of the nation, but the rhetorical discomfiture of men who are more seriously concerned with those interests, and who are better informed regarding them than the officials themselves. Conscious of their deficiencies, our Foreign Office spokesmen, whether in or out of Parliament, stand instinctively on the defensive, seeking a hiding-place like soft-shelled crustacea. The most innocent interrogatory is assumed to imply censure on themselves, and therefore to turn the point of the assailant's weapon by dexterous word-fence is the one art by which they hope to gratify their political ambition. But out of rhetoric was never a statesman produced.

As for the late Secretary himself, Olympian Jove is not more aloof from the common concerns of men. Yet with him it was not ever thus. Time was when his ears were open to all that was passing on the world's stage, and what was pressing on the English people. Scouts from the ends of the earth were not then unwelcome visitors. How much of the change is due to the increasing burden of work, and how much to the increasing burden of years, cannot be determined, but, apart from both these causes of impaired efficiency, much of Lord Salisbury's shortcomings as Foreign Minister may be traced to the condition of the instrument with which he has had to work. No consistent foreign policy is possible in this country so long as the executive department is in its present condition of chaos and helplessness. For this state of things no Government and no Minister can be held responsible, but it is a matter of as much concern to the nation as is the efficiency of the army and the navy. In home affairs the country may be trusted to look after its own interests, and a Minister can afford to wait for the impulse from below. His proper function there is judicious steering rather than propelling. But in foreign affairs waiting on Providence is a ruinous policy, for there a Minister has to deal with ambitious Powers, who are incessantly seeking to invade the rights of our empire. It is there that an intelligent anticipation of events is as essential as a strong hand to give effect to the decisions which such intelligent anticipation may prompt. With a Foreign Office system such as ours no appreciation of coming events is possible, and any decision taken in regard to them must be mainly haphazard.

The external affairs of Great Britain are distributed without system between the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices. Their provinces overlap and intersect each other in a most curious manner, like the divis-

isms of some of the northern counties of Scotland. The India Office controls the affairs of India, Afghanistan, Beloochistan, Burma, Aden, and adjacent territory; the Foreign Office, Persia, Siam, Japan, and China; while the Colonial Office governs Ceylon, the Straits, and Hongkong—divisions which are not wholly irrational, though they come very near to clashing. But in Africa there is from north to south a complete jumble of jurisdictions between the Colonial and Foreign Office, and such a variety in the constitution of the governed territories as is hardly equalled in all the rest of the world. From the Northern Pacific to the extreme south of South America, again, there are numerous patches of territory which, under one form or another, are administered from the Foreign Office. All this is wholly alien to the proper function of a Foreign Office, and is incompatible with the theory of diplomatic intercourse which is professedly directed from Downing Street. Work of novel and nondescript character has encrusted the department to such an extent that no freedom of movement is possible, nor can any kind of order be maintained. The range of its responsibilities is, indeed, so vast and varied that the capacity of the office is wholly inadequate to cope with them. The natural consequence is that everything is neglected with absolute impartiality, and when some question of immediate urgency comes upon the Office spasmodic effort is made to cope with that, but without preparation, without information; and amid the utmost confusion action is taken, generally of an unfortunate character. The officials on such occasions are at the mercy of those, whether friends or foes, who are acquainted with the subject. A Russian agent will confute them with a map, and reduce them to submission. A native adventurer or syndicate will hustle them into a course of procedure which they enter blindly, for the Foreign Office knows no halting-place between *non possumus* and surrender to the schemes urged upon it. It has not the means of forming an independent opinion, nor perhaps the capacity for doing so, even if it possessed the data. The faculty of judgment is atrophied by disuse. Not that information has not been furnished, but that it has never been and cannot be assimilated. It is so hidden away, that when a critical time comes it is as good as lost, for no one in the Office knows where to find it, and none would know its significance if found. No matter what the subject may be which comes up for decision, the Foreign Office is taken at a disadvantage. One who recently had a conference with Ministers and Secretaries on the China Question found their "ignorance appalling." Their ignorance grows deeper year by year, for as surely as demand creates supply, does the absence of demand check production. The agents abroad discovering that information is the com-

modity which is not wanted cease sending it, and these well-trained "dumb-dogs" are the men who carry off the honours of the service. They know what is expected of them—it is, to give no trouble to the department; and the only acceptable report they can send is that there is nothing to say, that all is quiet in their district. Whosoever violates this unwritten law by telling the truth to his department in the interests of the country, has a black mark set against his name, — he will never be raised to the peerage! For all this, and much more than we can write here, it is the system and not the indi vidual that must be blamed. Men are but men, and the official day consists of a small number of hours. The mere quill-driving work of Government offices is something enormous. The staff is employed all day long writing elaborate despatches to each other about nothing at all. The commercial interests of the country alone fall under the supervision of three different departments — the Board of Trade, Foreign Office, and the Colonial Office. Whatever reports or other documents are received by one of these departments have to be recopied and sent to the others, always with official covering letters. These are so voluminous and so purely mechanical that the whole affair is buried and lost sight of, and no one is the better for what appears to be a mass of information. If any intelligent interest were taken in the matter so reported on, it might be sufficiently gratified by the official whom it concerned stepping into the next room or across the passage and inspecting the *dossier*. The excessive writing, docketing, and filing has no other result but that of wasting time and consigning useful facts to hopeless obscurity. As the work of the Foreign Office in connection with current events is a mere hysterical scramble, without order, system, or coherence, the effect of it upon the officials themselves is only what might be expected. They enter the service with the average allowance of intelligence, and inspired by the ordinary ambitions of young men willing to rise in the world and make themselves useful to their country. They are neither better nor worse than an equal number promiscuously drawn from the community. But five years of the Foreign Office work is generally considered sufficient to extinguish the high spirit in which they entered into the service, to destroy the power of initiative, and to reduce the most promising to the condition of slaves to a barren routine. By that time, however, they have learnt the golden rule of the modern diplomatist, "Give no trouble to the Foreign Office, and get on with all your neighbours."

When we consider that the Foreign Office is the nursery of the diplomatic service, we can the better understand the state of enfeeblement into which that grand old service

has in our generation fallen. The river cannot rise above its source, and we see in most of our representatives abroad but too faithful an echo of the spirit of Downing Street. The reckless way in which some of our most important diplomatic posts have been filled for years past is only to be explained by the desperate poverty of the service in men of capacity. When serious work has to be done Government has to go outside the diplomatic family to find men to whom the important interests of the country may be safely entrusted. These men become so essential that when once settled in a post, —at Cairo, for instance, or Washington,—they can never after be spared because of the impossibility of replacing them —a self-evident criterion of the demonstration of the negative value of Foreign Office training.

The question frequently posed by officials to their critics when some terrible emergency is upon them is, "What would you do in our place?" Stated in this isolated form, it is not a fair question, for the critic could very well say, "I have been warning you for years against following a course which would place your ship on the rocks, and since you would not take advice when it would have saved you, it is useless giving it to you now when all the mischief has been done. Moreover, before telling you what should be done it would be necessary to be shown who is to do it, and by what instruments he is to work. You have yourselves proved by the exhaustive process that your whole foreign service is below low-water mark, that it is incapable of carrying on the ordinary functions of your department with any kind of credit, and that therefore, *a fortiori*, it is incapable of dealing with any subject that rises above the everyday level. To commit the interests of the country in a serious crisis to such hands as those you have at your disposal would be as disappointing as sending a military force into South Africa armed with bows and arrows. There must be some correspondence between means and ends before any campaign can be undertaken, and with your present equipment you would be out-manœuvred, out-ranged, and defeated were you to attempt any operations beyond your entrenchments.

But the nation may naturally demand that its diplomatic service, like its army, shall be reformed and made efficient. It will not be found an easy task to reform the army, but as regards the Foreign Office no measure would be efficacious that stopped short of reforming it altogether. Nothing less than the reconstitution of our whole external service will suffice for the growing needs of the empire. Such a reconstitution would have to include consolidation of existing services with central control and responsibility. The absence of co-ordination between the India, the Colonial, and Foreign Offices, whose functions overlap, reduces our foreign services to the condition of nominally

allied forces without a central command, of which the recent fiascos in China afford a pertinent illustration. The miscellaneous aggregate of our imperial interests, requiring each some special treatment, group themselves like the fauna and flora into genera and species. The Colonies themselves are of several distinct kinds, and the Minister who has to deal with the great commonwealths of Englishmen in America, Africa, and Australia is hardly competent to administer communities of "natives" with their complicated customs and traditions. In like manner, men trained in the etiquette of the Courts in Christendom are thereby disqualified for service in non-Christian countries, where all their maxims would have to be unlearned before they could begin their education in oriental diplomacy. The official divisions into Foreign, Indian, and Colonial do not, in fact, correspond with the natural divisions, and any recasting of the offices concerned should be based upon the natural rather than the artificial classification. What seems most urgently needed, and it has been pointed out repeatedly for years past, is an Asiatic department which would relieve the Colonial Office of the charge of Hongkong, the Straits, Borneo, New Guinea, and other distant possessions, and the Foreign Office of China, Japan, Corea, Persia, &c. With such a distribution of labour each department might be able to train its staff and concentrate its efforts on its appropriate work, which might then have some chance of being efficiently done. The India Office would have its hands quite sufficiently occupied with India proper, Afghanistan, Beloochistan, and perhaps Ceylon, which is by nature a pendant to the Indian peninsula. The Colonial Office would be enabled to do more justice than it possibly can at present to the great and growing English communities in the three continents before mentioned. It is a far cry, we are well aware, to any such remodelling of our services as is here pointed out, but until something of the kind is effected the nation must be content to have its work perfunctorily done,—to see itself worsted in every struggle with rival nations. The limitation of its powers will require it to restrict its enterprises in accordance therewith. Grandiose schemes of world policy lie outside of its range, the country will be condemned to wait passively on events, and allow its interests to be drifted hither and thither by the tide, and in effect to have the law of its commercial development laid down by its commercial rivals.

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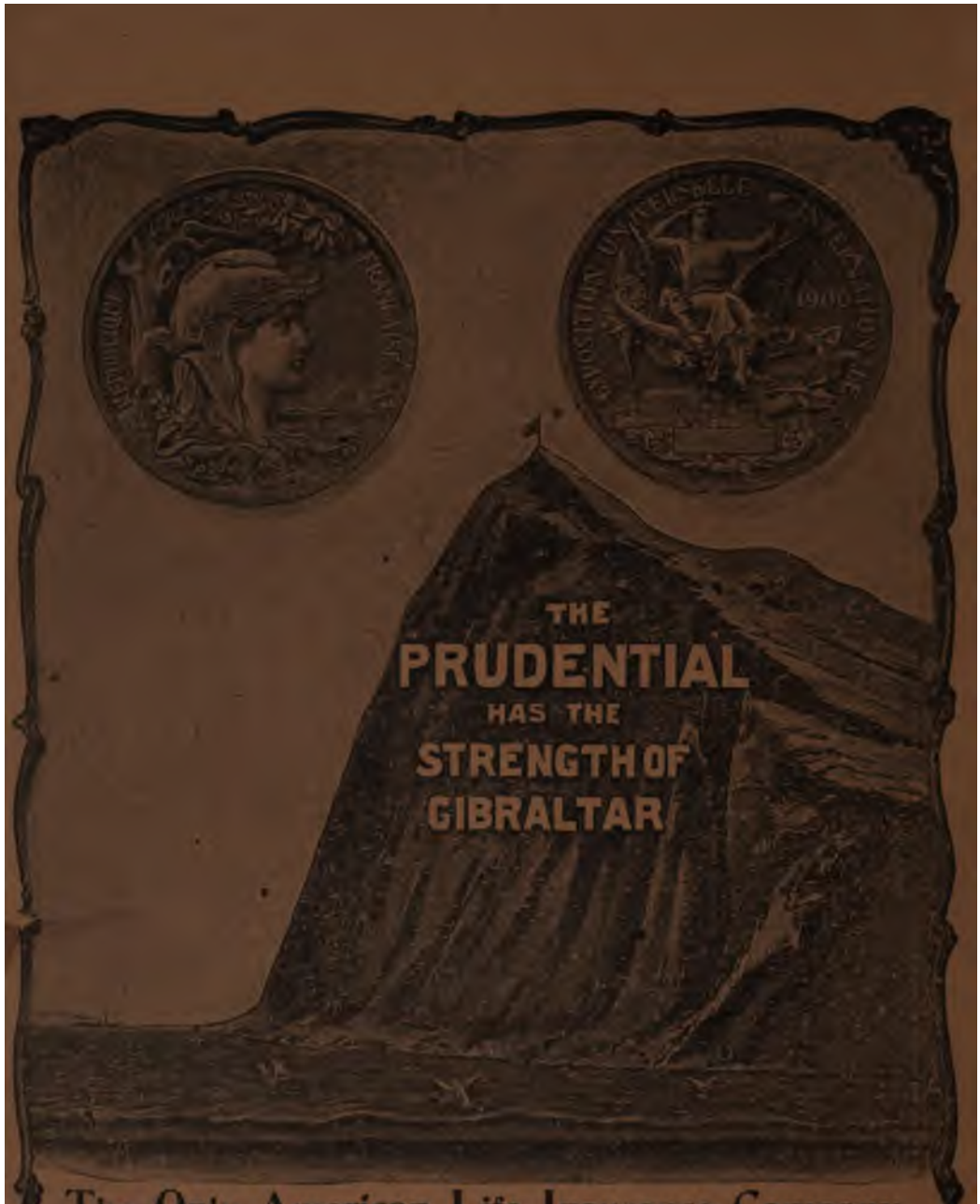

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